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THE  
THEATRE:

OR,  
A SELECTION OF EASY PLAYS,

TO FACILITATE  
THE STUDY OF THE  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

BY  
J. H. EMMERT. K

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GOTTINGEN,

Printed for J. CHR. DIETTERICH

1789.

THE

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1694

ENGLISH

J. H. L.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

No sort of reading is more conducive to the acquirement of a foreign language than that of plays. Their contents are entertaining, and the expressions those of common life, the knowledge of which is absolutely necessary for conversation. The colle-

collection now presented to the  
publick has this object in view  
to render the acquirement of  
the English language agreeable  
and easy to my young country-  
men. Should this volume meet  
with their approbation, it may  
be perhaps succeeded by an  
other.

Gottingen Jan. 3<sup>d</sup>, 1789.

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Persons

THE

S W O R D

A DRAMA,

IN ONE ACT.

A



*Persons.*

*Lord Onsburch.*

*Augustus, - - - his Son.*

*Henrietta, - - - his Daughter.*

*Elder Raynton,*

*Younger Raynton,*

*Friends of Augustus.*

*Elder Dudley*

*Younger Dudley,*

*Crape, - - - a Servant to Lord Onsburch.*

*SCENE. The Apartment of Augustus.*

## SCENE II.

## S W O R D,

## A DRAMA.

## SCENE I.

*Augustus.*

Aha! this is my birth-day! They did well to tell me, otherwise I should never have thought of it. Well, it will bring me some new present from papa. But, let's see what will he give me? Crape had something under his coat when he went into papa's room. He would not let me go in with him. Ah! if I were not obliged to appear a little more sedate than usual I should have forced him to shew me what he was carrying. But hilt! I shall soon know it. Here comes my papa.

## THE SWORD.

## SCENE II.

*Lord Onsburn* (*holding in his hand a sword and belt.*) *Augustus.*

*Lord Onsb.*

Ah! are you there, Augustus? I have already wished you joy of your birth-day; but that is not enough, is it?

*Aug.*

Oh! papa — but what have you in your hand there?

*Lord Onsb.*

Something that I fear will not become you well.

A sword; look ye!

*Aug.*

What! is it for me? Oh! give it to me, dear papa; I will be so good and so diligent for the future —

*Lord Onsb.*

Ah! if I thought that! But do you know that a sword requires a man? That he must be no longer a child who wears one, but should conduct himself with circumspection and decency; and, in short, that it is not the sword that adorns the man, but the man that adorns the sword.

*Aug.*

Oh! never fear me. I shall adorn mine, I warrant, and I'll have nothing to say to those mean persons —

*Lord Onsb.*

Whom do you call those mean persons?

*Aug.*

## THE SWORD.

5

*Aug.*

I mean those who cannot wear a sword and a bag; those who are not of the nobility, as you and I are.

*Lord Onsb.*

For my part, I know no mean persons but those who have a wrong way of thinking, and a worse of conducting themselves; who are disobedient to their parents, rude and unmannerly to others: so that I see many mean persons among the nobility, and many noble amongst those whom you call mean.

*Aug.*

Yes, I think in the same manner.

*Lord Onsb.*

What were you talking then just now, of a bag and sword? Do you think that the real advantages of nobility consist in those fopperies? They serve to distinguish ranks, because it is necessary that ranks should be distinguished in the world. But the most elevated rank does only add more disgrace to the man unworthy to fill it.

*Aug.*

So I believe, papa. But it will be no disgrace to me to have a sword, and to wear it.

*Lord Onsb.*

No. I mean that you will render yourself worthy of this distinction no otherwise than by your good behaviour. Here is your sword, but remember —

A 3

*Aug.*

## THE SWORD.

*Aug.*

Oh! yes, papa. You shall see! (*He endeavours to put the sword by his side, but cannot. Lord Onsburch helps him to buckle it on.*)

*Lord Onsb.*

Eh! why it does not sit so ill.

*Aug.*

Does it now? Oh! I knew that.

*Lord Onsb.*

It becomes you surprizingly. But, above all things, remember what I told you. Good by! (*Going, he returns.*) I had forgot. I have just sent for your little party of friends to spend this day with you. Observe to behave yourself suitably.

*Aug.*

Yes, papa.

## SCENE III.

*Augustus.*

(*He struts up and down the stage, and now and then looks back to see if his sword be behind him.*) This is fine! this is being something like a gentleman! let any of your citizens come in my way now. No more familiarity if they do not wear a sword: and if they take it amiss — Aha! — out with my rapier. But hold! let us see first if it has a good blade. (*drawing his sword and using furious gestures.*) What, does that

tra-



## THE SWORD

7

tradesman mean to affront me! — One, — two! —  
Ah! you defend yourself, do you? — Die, scoundrel!

### SCENE IV.

*Henrietta, Augustus.*

*Henrietta.* (who screams on hearing those last words.)

Bless me! Augustus, are you mad?

*Aug.*

Is it you, sister?

*Henrietta.*

Yes, you see it is. But what do you do with that  
instrument? (pointing to the sword.)

*Aug.*

Do with it? what a gentleman should do.

*Henrietta.*

And who is he that you are going to send out of  
the world?

*Aug.*

The first that shall dare to take the wall of me!

*Henrietta.*

I see there are many lives in danger. And if I  
should happen to be the person —

*Aug.*

You? — I would not advise you. I wear a sword  
now, you see. Papa made me a present of it.

A 4

*Henrietta.*

— *Henrietta.* OF COURSE, I SUPPOSE

I suppose to go and kill people, right or wrong.

*Aug.*

An 't I the honourable? If they do not give me the respects due, smack, a box on the ear: and if your little commoner will be impertinent, — sword in hand — (going to draw it.)

*Henrietta.*

Oh! leave it in quiet brother. And lest I should run the risque of affronting you unknowingly, I wish to be informed what the respect is that you demand.

*Aug.*

You shall soon see. My father has just sent for some of my young acquaintance. If those little puppies do not behave themselves respectfully, you shall see how I will manage.

*Henrietta.*

Very well; but I ask you what we must do to behave ourselves respectfully towards you?

*Aug.*

In the first place, I insist upon a low bow; very low.

*Henrietta.* (with an affected gravity making him a low curtsy.)

Your lordship's most humble servant. Was that well?

*Aug.*

## THE SWORD.

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*Aug.*

No joking, Henrietta, if you please or else —

*Henrietta.*

Nay, I am quite serious, I assure you. We must take care to know and perform our duty to respectable persons. It would not be amiss to inform your little friends too,

*Aug.*

Oh! I will have some sport with those fellows; give one a pull, t'other a pinch, and play all sorts of tricks on them.

*Henrietta.*

Those, I take it, are some of the duties of a gentleman that wears a sword; but if those fellows should not like the sport, and return it on the gentleman's ears —

*Aug.*

What! low vulgar blood? No, they have neither hearts nor swords.

*Henrietta.*

Really, papa could not have given you a more usefull present. He saw plainly what a hero was concealed in the person of his son, and that he wanted but a sword to shew him in his proper light.

A 5

*Aug.*

## TO THE SWORD.

*Aug.*

Hark ye, sister! it is my birth-day, we must divert ourselves. However you will not say any thing of it to papa.

*Henrietta.*

Why not? he would not have given you a sword, if he did not expect some exploit of this sort from a gentleman newly equipt. Would he have advised you otherwise?

*Aug.*

Certainly! you know that he is always preaching to me.

*Henrietta.*

What has he been preaching to you, then?

*Aug.*

I don't know, not I. That I should adorn my sword, and not my sword me.

*Henrietta.*

In that case you understood him properly, I must say; to adorn one's sword, is to know how to make use of it; and you are willing to shew already that you have that knowledge.

*Aug.*

Very well, sister! you think to joke; but I would have you to know, madam —

*Henrietta.*

# THE SWORD.

II

*Henrietta.*

Oh! I know extremely well, all that you can tell me; but do you know too, that there is one principal ornament wanting to your sword?

*Aug.*

What is that? (*unbuckles the belt and looks all over the sword.*) I do not see that there is the least thing wanting.

*Henrietta.*

Really, you are a very clever swordsman. But a sword-knot, now? Ah! how a blue and silver knot would dangle from that hilt!

*Aug.*

You are right, Henrietta. Hark ye! you have a whole band-box full of ribbands in your room; so —

*Henrietta.*

I was thinking of it; provided that you do not give me a specimen of your fencing, or lay your blade about me in return.

*Aug.*

Nonsense! here is my hand, that is enough, you have nothing to fear. But quick, — a handsome knot! when my little party comes they shall see me in all my grandeur.

*Henrietta.*

Give it to me, then.

*Aug.*



## THE SWORD.

*Aug. (giving her the sword.)*

There, make haste! you will leave it in my room, on the table, that I may find it when I want it.

*Henrietta.*

Depend on me.

### SCENE V.

*Augustus, Henrietta, Crape.*

*Crape.*

The two Master Dudleys, and the Master Rayntons, are below.

*Aug.*

Well! cannot they come up? must I go to receive them at the bottom of the stairs?

*Crape.*

My lady ordered me to tell you to come and meet them.

*Aug.*

No, no; it is better to wait for them here.

*Henrietta.*

Nay, but since mamma desires that you will go down.

*Aug.*

Indeed, they are worth all that ceremony! Well, I shall go directly. Come, what are you doing? will this make my sword knot? go, run, and let me

# THE SWORD.

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me find it on my table properly done. (Going out.)

Do you hear?

## SCENE VI.

*Henrietta.*

The little insolent! in what a tone he speaks to me! luckily I have the sword. A proper instrument indeed, in the hand of so quarrelsome a boy! yes, yes, stay till I return it to you. My papa does not know you so well as I. But he must be told. — Ah! here he is.

## SCENE VII.

*Lord Onsbrough, Henrietta.*

*Henrietta.*

You are come in good time, papa. I was going to you.

*Lord Onsb.*

What have you then of so much consequence to tell me? — But what do you do with your brother's sword?

*Henrietta.*

I have promised him to put a handsome knot to it; but it was only to get this dangerous weapon out of his hands. Do not give it to him again whatever you do.

*Lord*

## 14 THE SWORD.

*Lord Onsb.* Why should I take back a present that I have given him?

*Henrietta.* At least be so good as to keep it until he becomes more peaceable. I just now found him all alone, laying about him like Don Quixote, and threatening to make his first trial of fencing upon his companions that come to see him.

*Lord Onsb.* The little quarreller! If he will use it for his first exploits, they shall not turn out to his honour, I promise you. Give me this sword.

*Henrietta.* (gives him the sword.) There, Sir. I hear him on the stairs.

*Lord Onsb.* Run, make his knot, and bring it to me when it is ready. (They go out.)

## SCENE VIII.

*Augustus, elder Dudley, younger Dudley, elder Raynton, younger Raynton.*

(Augustus enters first with his hat on; the others follow him uncovered.)

*Elder Dudley.* (aside to elder Raynton.) This is a very polite reception.

*Elder*

*Elder Raynton (aside to elder Dudley.)*

I suppose it is the fashion now to receive company with one's hat on, and to walk before them in one's own house.

*Aug.*

What are you mumbling there?

*Elder Dudley.*

Nothing, Mr. Onsburch; nothing.

*Aug.*

It is something that I should not hear?

*Elder Raynton.*

Perhaps it may.

*Aug.*

Now I insist upon knowing it.

*Elder Raynton.*

When you have a right to demand it.

*Elder Dudley.*

Softly, Raynton: it does not become us in a strange house —

*Elder Raynton.*

It is still less becoming to be unpolite in one's own house.

*Aug. (haughtily.)*

Unpolite? I unpolite? Is it because I walked before you?

*Elder*

*Elder Raynton.*

That is the very reason. Whenever we have the honour to receive your visits, or those of any other person, we never take the precedence.

*Aug.*

You only do your duty. But from you to me —

*Elder Raynton.*

What then, from you to me? —

*Aug.*

Are you noble?

*Elder Raynton* (to the two Dudleys and his brother.)

Let us leave him to himself, with his nobility, if you will take my advice..

*Elder Dudley.*

Fie! Mr. Onsburch! if you think it beneath your dignity to keep company with us, why invite us here? we did not ask that honour.

*Aug.*

It was not I that invited you; it was my papa.

*Elder Raynton.*

Then we will go to my lord, and thank him for his civility. At the same time we shall let him know that his son thinks it a dishonour to receive us. Come brother!

*Aug.* (stopping him.)

You cannot take a joke, Master Raynton. Why, I am very happy to see you. It was to do me a pleasure



## THE SWORD. 17

pleasure that papa invited you, for this is my birth-day. I beg you will stay with me.

*Elder Raynton.*

That is another affair. But be more polite for the future. Though I have not a title, as you have, yet I will not suffer any one to offend me without resenting it.

*Elder Dudley.*

Be quiet, Raynton; we should rest good friends.

*Younger Dudley.*

This is your birth-day then, Mr. Onsburch?

*Elder Dudley.*

I wish you many happy returns of it.

*Elder Raynton.*

So do I, Sir; and all manner of prosperity, (*aside*), and particularly that you may grow a little more polite.

*Younger Raynton.*

I suppose you have had several handsome presents.

*Aug.*

Oh! of course.

*Younger Dudley.*

A great deal of cakes and sweetmeats, no doubt?

*Aug.*

Ha! ha! cakes? that would be pretty indeed. I have them every day.

*Younger*

*Younger Dudley.*

Ah! then, I'll wager, it is in money. Two or three crowns? eh!

*Aug. (disdainfully.)*

Something better, and which I alone of all here — yes, I alone, have a right to wear.

*(Elder Raynton and elder Dudley converse aside.)*

*Younger Raynton.*

If I had what has been given you, I could wear it as well as another, perhaps.

*Aug. (looking at him with an air of contempt.)*

Poor creature! *(to the two elder brothers.)* What are you both whispering there again? I think you should assist to amuse me.

*Elder Dudley.*

Only furnish us with the means.

*Elder Raynton.*

He that receives friends should study their amusement.

*Aug.*

What do you mean by that, Mr. Raynton?

# THE SWORD.

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## SCENE IX.

*Elder Raynton, younger Raynton, elder Dudley, younger Dudley, Augustus, Henrietta.*

*Henrietta. (bringing in a plate with cakes.)*

Your servant, gentlemen; I am glad to see you well.

*Elder Raynton.*

Much at your service, miss, *(bowing to her.)*

*Elder Dudley.*

We are happy to see you, miss, amongst our party.

*Henrietta.*

Sir, you are very obliging. *(To Augustus.)* Brother, mamma has sent you this to entertain your friends, until the chocolate is ready. Grape will bring it up presently, and I shall have the pleasure of helping you.

*Elder Raynton.*

Miss, you will do us a great deal of honour.

*Aug.*

We do not want you here! — But now I think of it; my sword-knot!

*Henrietta.*

You will find the sword and the knot in your room. Good by, gentlemen, until I see you again.

B 2

*Elder*

*Elder Raynton.*

Shall we soon have the favour of your company, miss?

*Henrietta.*

I am going to ask mamma leave.

### SCENE X.

*Elder Raynton, younger Raynton, elder Dudley, younger Dudley, Augustus.*

*Augustus. (sitting down.)*

Come, take chairs, and sit down. (They look at each other, and sit down without speaking. Augustus helps the two youngest, and then himself so plentifully, that nothing remains for the two eldest.) Stop a moment! They will bring in more, and then I'll give you some.

*Elder Raynton.*

Oh! no; we do not desire it.

*Augustus.*

Oh! with all my heart!

*Elder Dudley.*

If this be the politeness of a young nobleman —

*Augustus.*

Is it with such as you that one must stand upon Ceremony? I told you before, that they will bring

us up something else. You may take it when it comes, or not take it, you understand that?

*Elder Raynton.*

Yes; that is plain enough; and we see plainly too in what company we are.

*Elder Dudley.*

Are you going to begin your quarrels again? Mr. Onsbrough, Raynton, fie! (*Augustus rises; all the rest rise also.*)

*Aug. (going up to the elder Raynton.)*

In what company are you then, my little sir?

*Elder Raynton. (firmly.)*

With a young nobleman that is very rude and very impudent; who values himself more than he ought; and who does not know how well-bred people should behave one to the other.

*Elder Dudley.*

We are all of the same opinion.

*Augustus.*

I rude and impudent? Tell me so, who am a gentleman?

*Elder Raynton.*

Yes, I say it again; very rude, and very impudent; though you were a duke, though you were a prince.

*Aug.*



*Aug. (striking him.)*

I'll teach you to whom you are talking. (*Elder Raynton goes to lay hold on him. Augustus slips back, goes out, and shuts the door after him.*)

## SCENE XI.

*Elder Raynton, younger Raynton, elder Dudley, younger Dudley.*

*Elder Dudley.*

Bless me, Raynton, what have you done? He will go to his father, and tell him a thousand stories. What will he think of us?

*Elder Raynton.*

His father is a man of honour. I will go to him, if Augustus does not. He certainly has not invited us here to be ill-treated by his son.

*Younger Dudley.*

He will send us home, and make a complaint against us.

*Younger Raynton.*

No; my brother behaved himself properly. My papa will approve what he has done, when we tell him the whole. He does not understand having his children ill used.

*Elder Raynton.*

Come with me. Let us all go and find Lord Onsburch.

SCENE

## THE SWORD.

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### SCENE XII.

*Elder Raynton, younger Raynton, elder Dudley, younger Dudley, Augustus.*

*(Augustus enters with his sword undrawn. The two younger boys run, one into a corner, and the other behind an arm chair. Elder Raynton and elder Dudley stand firm.)*

*Aug.* *(going up to the elder Raynton.)*

Now I'll teach you, little insolent — *(Draws, and instead of a blade, finds a long turkey's feather. He stops short, in confusion. The little ones burst into a loud laugh, and come up.)*

*Elder Raynton.*

Come on! Let us see the temper of your sword!

*Elder Dudley.*

Do not add to his confusion. He only deserves contempt.

*Younger Raynton.*

Aha! this was it, then, that you alone had a right to wear!

*Younger Dudley.*

He will do not great harm to any body with that terrible weapon.

*Elder Raynton.*

I could punish you now for your rudeness, but I should blush to take such a revenge.

B 4

*Elder*

## THE WORD.

*Elder Dudley.*

He is no longer worthy of our company. Let us all leave him to himself.

*Younger Raynton.*

Good by to you, Mr. Knight of the Turkey's Feather!

*Younger Dudley.*

We shall not come here again until you be disarmed, for you are too terrible now. (*As they are going, elder Raynton stops them.*)

*Elder Raynton.*

Let us stay, and give an account of our behaviour to his father, otherwise appearances will be against us.

*Elder Dudley.*

You are right. What would he think of us, were we to leave his house thus, without seeing him?

## SCENE XIII.

*Lord Onsburch, Augustus, elder Raynton, younger Raynton, elder Dudley, younger Dudley.*

*They all put on an air of respect, at the entrance of Lord Onsburch. Augustus goes aside and cries for spirits.*

*Lord Onsb. (to Augustus, looking at him with indignation.)*

What is this, Sir, that I hear? (*Augustus sobs, and cannot speak.*)

*Elder*

*Elder Raynton.*

My lord, you will pardon this disturbance that appears amongst us. It was not caused by us. From the first moment of our coming, Mr. Onsburgh received us so ill —

*Lord Onsb.*

Do not be uneasy, my dear little friend I know all. I was in the next room, and heard, from the beginning, my son's unbecoming discourse. He is the more blameable, as he had just been making me the fairest promises. I have suspected his impertinence for a long time, but I wished to see myself, how far he was capable of carrying it; and, for fear of mischief, I put a blade to his sword, that, as you see, will not spill much blood.

*(The children burst out a laughing)*

*Elder Raynton.*

Excuse the freedom, my lord, that I took, in telling him the truth a little bluntly.

*Lord Onsb.*

I rather owe you my thanks for it. You are an excellent young gentleman, and deserve much better than he does, to wear this badge of honour. As a token of my esteem and acknowledgment, accept this sword; but I will first put a blade to it that may be more worthy of you.

*Elder Raynton.*

Your lordship is to good; but allow us to withdraw. Our company may not be agreeable to Mr. Onsbrough to day.

*Lord Onsb.* —

No, no; my dear boys, you shall stay. My son's presence shall not disturb your pleasure. You may divert yourselves together, and my daughter shall take care to provide you with whatever may amuse you. Come with me into another apartment. As for you, Sir, (*to Augustus*) do not offer to stir from this place. You may celebrate your birth-day here all alone. You shall never have a sword, until you deserve it, if you were even to grow old without wearing one.

THE END.

Excuse the freedom, my lord, that I took, in telling him the truth a little plainly.

*Lord Onsb.*

I must owe you my thanks for it. You are an excellent young gentleman, and deserve much better than he does, to wear this badge of honour. As a token of my esteem and acknowledgment, accept this sword; but I will not give it a day to it that may be more worthy of you.

THE



THE

GOOD SON,

A DRAMA,

IN TWO ACTS.

CHARLES GOODSON,  
SON TO JEREMY.

BONIFACE, A MANAGER.  
RETURNING VISITANT, SOLICITOR, COUNTRY  
PEOPLE.

ACT I.  
SCENE I.  
A STREET IN LONDON.  
BONIFACE, CHARLES, JEREMY, CLARA.  
BONIFACE. (To CHARLES) My dear son, I am  
glad to see you. How are you?  
CHARLES. Very well, thank you, father.  
BONIFACE. (To JEREMY) My dear son, I am  
glad to see you. How are you?  
JEREMY. Very well, thank you, father.  
BONIFACE. (To CLARA) My dear daughter, I am  
glad to see you. How are you?  
CLARA. Very well, thank you, father.

THE

## *Persons.*

*Jeremy Goodacre, a Country Labourer.*

*Nanny Goodacre, his Wife.*

*Cicely, their Daughter.*

*Isaac, her Lover.*

*Charles Goodacre, { a Lieutenant of Foot,  
Son to Jeremy.*

*Boniface, a Schoolmaster.*

*Recruiting Serjant. Soldiers. Country  
People.*

THE GOOD SON

SCENE II

THE  
GOOD SON,  
A DRAMA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

*A grass plat before Jeremy Goodacre's cottage. In the middle of it, a large tree, with a seat round it.*

*Isaac. (alone.)*

I did not see her all yesterday. I have not spent a day this twelvemonth without seeing her. What can have happened? Every thing is quiet in the house. Ah! Cicely, can you sleep at ease, while you know how uneasy I am?— Mayhap she has changed her mind, and loves somebody else. (*Goes towards the cottage door.*) Heh! Cicely, Cicely!

SCENE

## SCENE II.

*Isaac, Cicely.**Cicely* (mimicking him.)

Heh! Isaac, Isaac! — Well, here I am.

*Isaac.*

You seem to be in high spirits, Cicely.

*Cicely.*

Are you angry that I am glad to see you?

*Isaac.*

You did not want to see me yesterday though, or you would have been where you promised.

*Cicely.*

Well, are you going to scold me? Do you think I was not as uneasy as you were?

*Isaac.*

Dear heart! Cicely are you serious? Well, now I am as happy as I was dull a minute ago. But what hindered you to come?

*Cicely.*

You know it was the first day of the month; and when my brother, at his landing, wrote to father from Portsmouth, he told him that he should hear from him again, without fail, as yesterday.

*Isaac.*

Well?

*Cicely.*

# THE GOOD SON.

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*Cicely.*

So father would not wait for the post-man, but sent me, about four o'clock; to the post-office for the letter. They told me there, to wait; that it could not be long before the coach came in: so I staid, upon thorns. And father, uneasy at my stop, came soon afterwards; and before a quarter of an hour's end, comes mother too. You know I could not quit them. So there we staid until dark night, and no coach. I suppose some accident had happened. We came back sorrowful enough, and I could not leave father and mother grieving by themselves; now tell me, could I?

*Isaac.*

No, you are very right. I shan't scold you. But what is your hurry now? Where do you want to go?

*Cicely.*

To see if the letter is come yet. Father and mother are terribly uneasy. They are so fond of my brother, and he of them.

*Isaac.*

Now, Cicely — are you fond of me?

*Cicely.*

My brother, that was only a private soldier, and is now a lieutenant.

*Isaac.*

Yea, Cicely, but —

*Cicely.*



*Cicely.*

And has two or threescore men at his command,

*Isaac.*

Ah! your brother is well off.

*Cicely.*

How grand will he be in his scarlet coat and his gold shoulder-knot! Oh! it is a fine thing Isaac, to be a captain! Dost not think so?

*Isaac.*

Ay, I shall know it, I am afraid. He'll be ashamed now, mayhap, to see me one of his family, as I have no gold shoulder-knot, nor men at my command.

*Cicely.*

No, Isaac, do not make yourself uneasy. My father has lived in the same way of life with you these sixty years, and my brother has too much sense to despise it. He would have been the same as you; if he had not chanced to enlist when he was young. No, he will never look for a husband for his sister out of her own condition.

*Isaac.*

Ah! Cicely, how happy you make me!

SCENE

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### SCENE III.

*Jeremy, Cicely, Isaac.*

*Jeremy.*

Are you come back already? Where is the letter?  
Let's see.

*Cicely.*

Father, I have not been at the post-office yet.

*Jeremy.*

And you stand there, prating!

*Cicely.*

I was just a going. Well, I'll run as fast as I  
can. Will you go, Isaac?

*Jeremy.*

Ay, go together; so you will be back the sooner.  
But don't loiter on the road. And Cicely; as you  
pass, you'll tell Mr. Boniface, the schoolmaster, to  
come here and read the letter for me.

### SCENE IV.

*Jeremy.*

How uneasy I am about the delay of this letter;  
I could not rest the whole night. Ah! my dear  
boy, how the thoughts of you make us glad and  
sorry by turns!

C

SCENE

## SCENE V.

*Jeremy, Nanny.**Nanny.*

Well, this letter does not come. I don't know how it is; a dread hangs over me.

*Jeremy.*

Do not be impatient, my dear! we shall hear from him presently and see him too again very soon. I know we shall. Ah! I am sure I pray for that every day.

*Nanny.*

He is a soldier, my good man, and a soldier is not sure of his life a moment. That is what makes me unhappy. Very often, when his letters are read to us, and you imagine that I cry for joy, it is for grief and sorrow. Each, I think, is perhaps his last: and this money, that he sent us at his landing, I cannot look at it without a heavy sigh. As I said to myself, it is his pay from the king, the price of his blood; and can we, his father and mother, be happy while we are spending it? Ah! I wish he were here now.

*Jeremy.*

We shall have him by and by, never fear. He will come to quarter in some town, mayhap, near ourselves, and then we shall go and see him once a week.

*Nanny*

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*Nanny* (*overjoyed*) Ah! should I see  
Aye, twice, three times a week, my man, Ah!  
if that was the case, how happy should I be! But  
who can tell whether we shall know him again?

*Jeremy.*

Heh! I dare say I shall know my son.

*Nanny.*

What, when he is dressed like an officer, all over  
gold lace, with his breast-plate and his swastika?

## SCENE VI.

*Jeremy, Nanny, Boniface.*

*Boniface.*

Good morrow, neighbour Jeremy. Good mor-  
row, dame Goodacre.

*Jeremy.*

How dost do, Master Boniface? (*shaking him by  
the hand.*)

*Boniface.*

Well, you have received news from your son?  
Where is the letter? Let me read it to you.

*Jeremy.*

We have not received it yet, and I am so im-  
patient —

*Boniface.*

I suppose so, if it were only to have the honour  
of receiving a letter from a lieutenant. But how

the plague did he get up so high? I cannot think, for my part. Besides, you never shewed me his letter that mentions it; you got the exciseman to read it for you.

*Nanny.*

Then you did not hear that part, Mr. Boniface? Do, tell him how it was, Jeremiah.

*Boniface.*

Aye, come, do tell us about it, neighbour Jeremy.

*Jeremy.*

Well, master Boniface, the matter was as thus: In that last battle — at what d'ye call it — near — I never can think of the name; all his regiment was sadly mauled; most of the officers killed or wounded; My son too had received a ball, but never minded it. He rallied about three hundred men as well as he could, (*with vehemence*) led them up to the enemy, fell on with fixed bayonets, checked them so much that our people had time to retreat, and at last came off in good order at the head of fifty men. His general saw the whole, made him lieutenant upon the spot, and promised to befriend him as long as he lived. — Yes, master Boniface, it is all true. My son did just as I tell you.

*Boniface.*

Oh! it is a brave youth. I saw that long ago, while he was at school with me. When my boys

were



were at play, it was Charley that led the gang; and if ever there was a quatrel, he always sobered the stoutest of them. It was in him then, neighbour Jeremy. That is all natural to him.

*Jeremy* (laughing). One word, O' the peace, another word, O' the peace.

Aye, by the main, is it! But play now, do not read the letter without as

## SCENE VII.

*Jeremy, Nanny, Cicely, Boniface.*

*Cicely* (running).

Father! father! here is the letter, here it is; and another Bank-note in it, I dare say, for it feels thick.

*Jeremy*. Open the letter, how Master Boniface thought

My good Charley! I am afraid he hurts himself to serve me.

*Cicely*. Open the letter, how Master Boniface thought

And father, some more wine too. The wine-merchant, he with the great red nose, was at the post-office at the same time with me, and had just got an order to send you another hamper full. Isaac is gone to fetch it.

*Boniface*. O' the peace, another? Aye, the peace, another? Aye, the peace, another? Aye, the peace, another?

A hamper full? Why, still as last us ever.

*Jeremy*. I sent with his party in the town.

There will be some of that for you, Master Boniface. But, mean time, we have a little of this

*Boniface*. I shall

last left. You shall drink with me while you read the letter. Go, dame, and bring us that bottle and three glasses, with a bite of bread and cheese. We will make a breakfast of it here under the tree. Bring out a table; Cicely. Make haste.

*Nanny and Cicely (as they go off).*

But pray, now, do not read the letter without us.

*II Boniface.*

Never fear. You know, I cannot read before I break my fast.

### SCENE VIII.

*Jeremy, Boniface, Cicely (who goes backwards and forwards.)*

*Jeremy.*

Open the letter, however, Master Boniface, though we won't read it the more for that. And yet I am curious to know what he says about the peace, and if he will soon come and see us.

*Boniface.*

Of the peace, quotha? Aye, they talk of it a good deal, but I cannot think it. They recruit and impress still as fast as ever. Why, this morning a sergeant with his party came into the town.

*Jeremy.*

What, to recruit?

*Boniface.*

*Boniface.*

Ay, marry. The same that swears he enlisted Isaac, your daughter's sweet-heart, at the fair in the other town. Take care neighbour Jeremy, he'll carry off Cicely's husband that is to be, if you do not take care. He is a slippery fellow, that serjeant.

*Cicely* (coming near to listen.)

O gracious, are you in earnest, Master Boniface?

*Jeremy.*

Do not be afraid, child, you know it was all a trick.

*Boniface.*

Nay, if you are sure of that. But come, let us unseal — What a fine hand your son writes! how fair and legible: but he is indebted to me for it. (He hums, and begins to read.)

"Honoured father —"

*Ier.* (stretching his head out towards Boniface to hear the letter.)

Ah! my good Charley.

*Boniface.*

"As our regiment is ordered home, to remain in this country" —

*Jeremy.*

Heaven be praised! Then he will not cross the seas again. How happy my wife will be!

## THE GOOD SON.

*Boniface.*

"I hope shortly to have the happiness of seeing my family" —

*Jeremy.*

Oh! I knew we should soon have him here.

*Boniface.*

"Meantime I cannot give you greater satisfaction, than by informing you how honourably I have been treated a few days since" —

*Jeremy* (joyfully.)

Ay? Let us hear, let us hear.

*Boniface.*

"By the general, who politely invited me to dine with him." —

*Jeremy.*

My Charley to dine with him? Oh! how the rest would stare! all those great officers! Well! well!

*Boniface.*

"He held a particular conversation with me for a long time, and was pleased to pay me several compliments on my behaviour during the war, which were certainly more than I deserved. In short, he asked me where I was born, and who was my father" —

*Jeremy.*

What! the general ask about me? Well, what did he say? let's hear; quick, Master Boniface.

*Boniface.*

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*Boniface.*

"I told him that you were a poor honest labouring man, but that I would not change you for any father in the world, notwithstanding your condition." —

*Jeremy (lifting up his hands.)*

Heavenly goodness! I think I hear him.

*Boniface.*

"The general was pleased with this expression of my duty towards you, and filling his glass, drank your health in the presence of the whole table, requesting me to inform you that he had done himself that pleasure, and to assure you always of his friendship and good wishes."

*Jeremy (overjoyed.)*

Now, is it possible, Master Boniface? The general? Some duke, no doubt.

*Boniface.*

Ay, you hear he drank your health.

*Jeremy (runs towards the cottage, and calls out.)*

Wife! wife! never mind what you are doing there, but come hither; come quick.

*Nanny (from within the cottage.)*

What is the matter, Jeremiah?

*Jeremy.*

Nay, come, you shall hear; come, I tell you, quick.



## THE GOOD SON.

## SCENE IX.

*Jeremy, Boniface, Nanny.*

*Jeremy. (kissing Nanny.)*

Oh! my dear good wife, what a son thou hast given me!

*Nanny. (sets the wine and bread and cheese on the table. Boniface lays hold on it unconcernedly.)*

What is the matter good now? I am all over in a flutter of joy. Is he coming home?

*Jeremy.*

Oh! better than that. He dined with the general, d'ye know, and the general asked about our town, and about me, and my son told him that I was a poor labourer, but that he would not change me for all the fathers in the world. And with that the general drank my health publicly, and promised me his friendship. *(Nanny claps her hands for joy.)* So now, my dear, we must drink the general's health. Come, dame, take you that glass, you t'other Master Boniface, and I'll have this. *(Takes off his hat.)* Fill all bumpers. Come, here's a health to the noble general.

*Boniface.*

'Fore George, he does not drink better than this.

*Jeremy.*

Hark ye, neighbour Boniface, you must write for my to my son, as how I have pledged the general's health

health in a bumper; and that he must thank him from me, and assure him that I love him dearly. Now don't forget. Nay, by the rights of the business, it would not be amiss, I think, to send a civil line or two to himself.

*Boniface.*

Pooh! neighbour Jeremy, what dost talk on?

*Nanny.*

But Charley is coming home? is he? we shall soon see him. Eh?

*Jeremy.*

Softly, child, you will hear that directly.

*Nanny.*

Ah! if he could come before our Cicely is married, it would be a double happiness.

*Jeremy.*

Patience, patience; Master Boniface will go on.

*Nanny.*

Ay, ay; pray go on; mayhap he'll tell us something more.

*Boniface.* (*sitting down again.* *Nanny goes to his side, and listens attentively.*)

„Invited me to dine with him” — Where did I leave off? „Drank your health — Requesting me” — Ay, here it is — „Requesting me to inform you” —

SCENE X.

*Jeremy, Nanny, Cicely, Boniface.*

*Cicely.* (crying and sobbing) Help, help, father; here are the soldiers.

*Jeremy.*

How! What is the matter?

*Cicely.*

The recruiting serjeant is going to take away Isaac.

*Boniface.*

What, and the hamper of wine too, that he is bringing?

*Nanny.*

O my stars, this is a misfortune!

*Cicely.*

Do father, go and see if you can release him. You are his father as well as mine. The serjeant will respect you, I am sure. Every body respects you.

*Jeremy.*

Silly child! as if every body lived in our town. But make yourselves easy; it is not so bad perhaps as you imagine. I will go and talk to them.

*Cicely.*

Do father; and I will go with you: perhaps we may prevail on them.

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### SCENE XI.

*Nanny, Boniface.*

*Nanny.*

Lackaday! I wish I could follow you. But now Master Boniface, you that can speak like an oration, why don't you go and hold forth to them?

*Boniface.*

No, no; dame, my business is to comfort the afflicted. I cannot quit you.

*Nanny (with anxiety.)*

Bless me! don't I hear a noise already in the town? I hope no harm will happen to my poor man. Do, neighbour Boniface, go and see what is the matter.

*Boniface.*

Why you would not have me go? What, me?

*Nanny.*

Yes. You are a man of learning. You can talk to them something like.

*Boniface.*

Ay, so much the worse. These blades would desire no better sport than to fall foul of men of learning, like me. 'Sblood, keep to your books, they would say to me. And then again I am a little hasty, who can tell what might happen? I should never have meddled with learning, that is plain.

*Nanny.*

*Nanny.*

Come, you are one of our best friends, Mr. Boniface, and won't you help us?

*Boniface.*

Nay, but have a little moderation after all, Gammer. Think of my profession. I can give you counsels and consolations in English and in Latin, as much as you will, but for helping folks, it does not lie in my way.

*Nanny.*

Well, I could not have expected this of you. I see, I must hobble after them myself.

## SCENE XII.

*Boniface* (alone.)

Yes, yes! go and push myself in amongst a parcel of young swaggerers. I have only twenty brats in my school, and those young monkies play tricks on me from morning to night. What would I be amongst a score of great hulking fellows? I should have no rods there to frighten them. I think it is much better to finish this bottle, and then I can read the rest of the letter. I long to know — (*Fills his glass, and reads to himself.*) „The first of next month?” — Why that was yesterday. (*Continues to read eagerly.*) „The second? To be here on the second of the month?”

— Heh?



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-- Heh? they'll be quite happy. (*Drinks off his wine.*)  
There is not a moment to be lost. (*Fills again and drinks.*) I'll run after them, and bring them back.  
(*Fills and drinks a third time.*) The time is precious.  
(*Holding the bottle up, and seeing it empty, rises in a hurry, as if to run after them, and calls.*) Jeremy!  
Nanny! They are too far off: they do not hear me.  
Well, this news will make it up for me with Nanny. It would be a pity to quarrel with such good folks, especially just now, when they have got a fresh hamper of such nectar as this.

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## ACT II.

### SCENE I.

*Jeremy, Isaac, Nanny, the Serjeant, Country People, (Cicely and Soldiers standing by.)*

*The Serjeant (to the Soldiers.)*

Come, no more of this whining; take him before a justice.

*Country People.*

You won't take the man by force, will you?

*Isaac.*

Ay, let him, if he dare,

*The*

*The Serjeant.*

You may all talk as you will: this is my man.  
(Slapping on his pocket.) Here is my beating order,  
and that is enough.

*Isaac.*

Beating order? you have no order to trapan folks.

*Jeremy* (making a sign to the Country People  
to be silent.)

Hark ye, Mr. Serjeant, good words go a great  
way.

*The Serjeant.*

Good words? I desire no other. Let's see of what  
fort yours are.

*Jeremy.*

I'll tell you what, serjeant, I love my king and  
country with all my heart; and if the war was not  
almost over, and every thing settled, if we were in  
any danger, and there was a real occasion —

*The Serjeant.*

Is this all that you have to say?

*Jeremy.*

Nay, serjeant, only hear me.

*The Serjeant* (leaning on his cane.)

Well, let us hear.

*Jeremy.*

This young man is my son in law that is to be;  
but what of that? If things were as I told you, I  
should

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should be the first to say; carry him off. For what can there be more our duty, than do fight for one's country? Take myself too, I would say. My head is grey, it is true, and my face covered with wrinkles, but I am neither too old nor too weak to fight as well as another. My son's noble bravery has made me strong again. *(with vehemence.)* I will fight as long as I can carry a firelock, and when old age and weakness overpower me, I will hearten up the young fellows round me to behave themselves bravely. If I see any of them draw back, I'll throw myself in his way and stop his flight; or, if he will run, he shall pass over the carcase of a poor old man. Yes, upon my soul; serjeant, I would say exactly so, if things were at that pass.

### *The Serjeant.*

And I would say, My good old gentleman, you don't know what you are talking about.

### *Jeremy (advancing a step.)*

Hark ye, serjeant, mayhap you don't know what you are doing. If you give yourself airs with us, we'll find your betters some where; and if I write to my son, that is a lieutenant —

### *The Serjeant.*

You a son a lieutenant? But if you had a dozen, I can only say, that I must have Master Isaac here, or the smart money.

D

*Isaac.*

*Isaac.*

Ay, ay; this is a fine way to come and get folk's money. You a king's man?

*The Serjeant.*

I do no more than the king does, in regard to your money, except that I take the trouble to come for it myself. Two guineas, or he must march.

*Nanny.*

Nay, serjeant, for pity's sake —

*The Serjeant.*

Pity! we soldiers have much to do with pity. How would it be if the enemy were amongst you? No quarter then, but your money or your lives.

*Nanny (shuddering.)*

Oh dear me!

*The Serjeant.*

No, no, we have not much time for pity. Broken arms and legs are nothing amongst us — But come, we are losing time. Harkye, you must find the money, or the man is mine. Come along; march.  
(Goes off with the soldiers and Isaac.)

*Jeremy.*

Follow him, neighbours, to the justice's, if he goes there. I'll be after you presently. *(Cicely and the country people go out.)*

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### SCENE II.

*Jeremy, Nanny, Boniface* (out of breath.)

*Jeremy.*

Ah! Master Boniface, you left us in the lurch.

*Boniface.*

What a plague! I have been running after you this quarter of an hour.

*Jeremy.*

What is the matter, then? you seem all alive.

*Boniface.*

Matter? the matter is here, gaffer. (*Striking the letter.*) Why your son is to be with us to-day, man.

*Jeremy.*

To-day, Mr. Boniface?

*Boniface.*

Only hear. (*He reads.*) "Our regiment is ordered into quarters, and the first of next month the company to which I belong will march through your town.,, Look ye there neighbour Jeremy; the first, that is, as one should say, yesterday.

*Nanny.*

Is it possible? Yesterday? and not here yet?

*Boniface.*

Stop, stop. Hear what follows. (*Reads.*) "Or if not that day, on the second at farthest, I shall



ask permission of the commanding officer to go and see you as we pass by.

*Jeremy.*

Then my dear boy comes at last! Wife, I will go and meet him. I'll go as far as the great close. I'll stretch out my arms towards him, and call to him, My son, my dear son!

*Nanny.*

Nay, don't leave me pr'ythee. How can I keep pace with you, being so feeble? Then he will think that I do not love him as well as you do.

*Boniface.*

Ay, ay, stay where you are, neighbour. Only let me have a guinea, quick,

*Jeremy.*

A guinea? For what?

*Boniface.*

To keep the serjeant in discourse about the two guineas that he asks, and then when your son comes —

*Jeremy.*

Ah! right. Here my good friend. Run, see what you can do. For my part, I can think of nothing but my son at this moment. (*Boniface goes out running.*)

SCENE

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### SCENE III.

*Jeremy, Nanny.*

*Nanny.*

Pray, Jeremy, don't you go and leave me. I could not stay behind. You had better get up on this little hill. You will see farther from the top of it.

*Jeremy.*

You are right my dear. Marry, I am all on fire with joy and impatience.

*Nanny (while Jeremy goes up the hill.)*

Heaven be praised, then my son is come home again. I shall see him once more, after so many long years. Dear! how my heart beats! My joy was great when he came into the world, but now much greater. (*She calls to Jeremy.*) Well, my dear man, do you see nothing of him?

*Ier. (on tiptoes, holding his hand over his eyes.)*

Not yet, honey; the sun dazzles me.

*Nanny.*

I hope all this joy may not be out of season. Step down, and lend me a hand to get up. I shall see farther than you.

*Jeremy.*

What a dust! Is it a flock of sheep? No; I see the glistening of their arms. They are coming down by yon hill. It is they, my dear. It is they.

D 3

*Nanny.*

*Nanny.*

Do you see our boy?

*Jeremy.*

He cannot be far off. Eh! who is this that come galloping towards us through the town? *(He throws his hat up.)* Huzza! wife, here he comes on horseback. Our own Charley.

*Nanny.*

Good luck! I am out of my wits with joy. Oh! I must go to meet him. Gracious here he comes.

#### SCENE IV.

*Jeremy, Nanny, Lieutenant Goodacre.*

*Lieutenant Goodacre* *(entering as Jeremy comes down from the hill.)*

My dear father! *(embracing his father and mother.)*

*Jeremy.*

Ah! my good son. God bless thee, my dear boy! The sight of you makes me shed tears of joy. You have a thankful father.

*Nanny.*

Oh! that you have, my dear child, and a thankful mother too.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Why do you talk of thanks, my honoured parents? It is I that have obligations to you.

*Jeremy.*

*Jeremy.*

No, Charles. I will say it before all the world; you have repaid me much more than I have ever given you. You are all my comfort, and the happiness of my old age. It is you that keep me alive; and prolong my days.

*Nanny.*

We can never make you amends for the happiness that you afford us.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

And is it not the greatest happiness that I can enjoy myself? It would be none, if your affection did not make you share it with me. Yes, my dear and honoured parents; I have never ceased to think of you in every circumstance of life. When any good fortune has happened to me, I have thought very little of the advantage that fell to myself from it. The greatest pleasure that I felt at such times, was in thinking of the satisfaction that it would occasion to you. But in no part of my life have I enjoyed so great, so sensible a happiness as at this moment, when I see both your eyes filled with tears. (*taking each of them by the hand, and looking at them by turns.*) O my worthy parents, I can never satisfy myself with seeing you. — But compose yourselves. I cannot stay very long with you now. I shall return shortly, and spend a few days with you.

you. Well, how do you go on? How do you pass your old age? How do you live? Where is my sister, that I have not seen since she was in her cradle. Let me see her.

*Jeremy.*

She is a good girl, and gives us vast satisfaction. We are going to marry her, if you approve it. But I'll bring her hither directly. (*going, he returns.*) And yet I am grieved to tell you --

*Nanny.*

But for you she might be very unhappy. Our intended son-in-law, my dear child --

*Jeremy.*

Has been trappann'd by a serjeant, that luckily is still here. Before he releases him, he expects two guineas; and they have been promised to him, to keep him on the spot, as we were in hopes that you would come in the mean time. How happy it is that you arrived here to-day!

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Well, go father, and try to bring him hither without telling him that I am here, nor my sister neither.

*Jeremy.*

Nay, how shall I refrain! I would much rather cry out to every body that I meet, He is here, he is here. (*goes out.*)

SCENE



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## SCENE V.

*Nanny, Lieutenant Goodacre.*

*Lieutenant Goodacre.* (looking round him.)

How charming is this retreat! Now indeed I know the place of my birth. Yonder is the cottage that I have so often sighed after. There the great tree under the shade of which we used to sit with our neighbours on fine summer evenings: and here the hill that I chose for the scene of my sports. O happy years of my childhood! Of every spot that I see round me, there is none, my dear mother, that does not remind me of some mark or other of your affection. But you seem thoughtful.

*Nanny.*

My joy is so great, I can hardly give it vent. If I were alone, I could cry for an hour. Besides, too, I think —

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

What my dear mother?

*Nanny.*

That you are not our equal now. You are too much above us.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

I too much above you? Oh! banish that thought. Are not the ties of nature the most sacred? Am not I convinced that I cannot be dearer to any persons

upon earth than to you and my father? And should not I in return feel a more sincere affection to my parents, than to any other person in the universe? Ah! believe me, I shall continue to love and respect you the same as ever.

## SCENE VI.

*Nanny. Lieutenant Goodacre. Cicely.*

*Cicely* (enters hastily to her mother, without observing *Lieutenant Goodacre*.)

What is the matter, mother? Why did my father send me here in such a hurry? (perceiving *Lieut. Goodacre*, she draws back.) Oh goodness! an officer!

*Lieutenant Goodacre.* (aside to *Nanny*.)

Mother, is that my sister? (*Nanny* makes signs to him in the affirmative. He goes to kiss her.) What a charming countenance!

*Cicely* (struggling.)

Oh! fye sir; be quiet.

*Nanny*

What *Cicely*, to your brother?

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

How surprized she seems? Yes, *Cicely*, your brother, and I hope a brother that you love.

*Cicely.*

Dear mother! what this fine officer? Is he my brother *Charley*?

*Lieute-*

*Lieutenant Goodacre* (*hissing her.*)

What amiable innocence!

*Cicely* (*running to her mother, quite overjoyed.*)

Oh! mother, we have nothing to fear now. Isaac will soon be released.

SCENE VII.

*Jeremy, Nanny, Lieutenant Goodacre, Boniface, Cicely, Isaac, the Serjeant, Country People.*

*Jeremy* (*pointing to his son.*)

There, serjeant; there is the gentleman that will pay you the two guineas.

*The Serjeant* (*surprized.*)

How is this? an officer? (*takes off his hat.*)

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

You say, sir, that you have enlisted this man: where is your beating order?

*The Serjeant* (*presenting it to him with some confusion.*)

Here, sir.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

I see the number of your corps. What officer commands your party?

*The*

*The Serjeant.*

Captain Marshall, sir.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.* (having looked over the paper.)

Why this is but a copy. Well, I know your captain, and think I should know you too. Your dealing with this man does not seem to have been fair. I am afraid that you have abused the honourable profession of a soldier, and looked upon it as allowing you a privilege to extort poor people's money. I shall write to your captain, and meantime shall be answerable for this man's appearance. (*Serjeant goes off.*)

## SCENE VIII.

*Jeremy, Nanny, Lieutenant Goodacre, Boniface, Cicely, Isaac, Country People.*

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Come hither, sister: Is this your intended spouse? He is a clever young fellow. I like Cicely's choice very much.

*Isaac.*

You are very good, captain, to approve it, as I am no more than a husbandman.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

And what was my father? Are not you born of honest parents?

*Nanny.*

*Nanny.*

Yes indeed; my dear son, as honest as any in the parish.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Well, I shall not be happy unless I am at your wedding. I shall take all the expence of it upon myself.

*Country People (with a murmur of approbation.)*

That is very generous indeed.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

But do not I see Mr. Boniface?

*Boniface.*

Yes, captain, much at your service.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Ah! one of my oldest acquaintances. (*shaking hands with him.*) I am sorry to have made him angry so often formerly.

*Boniface.*

That is all past. The present does me much honour. Do you know, captain, that it was I who read all your letters for this good couple? I have spread your reputation through the whole country. Indeed I came in myself for some share of it.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Yes, Mr. Boniface, I acknowledge it with pleasure. Your instructions have not been entirely useless to me in my advancement.

*Boniface.*



*Boniface* (*bows affectedly, and rises with a pedantic toss of his head.*)

Who would think (*aside*) that I have flogged captain?

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Father, do these good people belong to the village?

*Jeremy.*

Yes, child, they are our neighbours, and have been very kind to us in our old age.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

I am heartily obliged to you, my good friends.

*Country People* (*approaching familiarly.*)

How plain he is, and how affable! He does not think himself above us. Kindly welcome home, captain. We have always been glad to hear news from you, when you were abroad. (*Lieutenant Goodacre takes each of them by the hand.*)

*Jeremy.*

Every thing that I see of you, my dear son, pleases me highly, and convinces me, that what ever I heard to your advantage was true. You certainly have behaved yourself as a worthy soldier.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

I hope so, father; and I am indebted for it to your good advice, and that of my mother. There is no part of the world, I thank heaven, where my memory is hateful: I flatter myself that in many

parts

## THE GOOD SON.

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parts it is respected. (*looking at his watch.*) But my time is almost expired. I must leave you, my dear parents.

*Nanny.*

What, already? so soon?

*Jeremy.*

Stop a little longer. We have scarcely had time to look to you.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

I must absolutely join our division again. Be assured that my heart alone would be sufficient to keep me here, if my duty did not call me away. But shall I ask you one thing before I leave you?

*Jeremy and Nanny.*

Any thing, child, any thing.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Well then, my dear parents, come and live with me. You shall command my pay, such as it is, in the same manner as you ever command my duty and affection.

*Jeremy and Nanny.*

My dear son —

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

You hesitate? Ah! your consent must be quite voluntary. It would be no happiness to me, if it ceased to be one to you.

*Jeremy.*

## THE GOOD SON.

*Jeremy.*

Hear me my dear child. We are old, and cannot live long. Let us die in our cottage; that spot is dear to us, since in it you was born. Only come and make us happy with the sight of you now and then, it is all that we desire.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

Oh! certainly, certainly, father.

*Nanny.*

And we, my dear son, will go to see you in return. They will be days of happiness to us when we see you, and we shall never cease to bless heaven for having given us such a son.

*Lieutenant Goodacre.*

**THE END.**

*Jeremy and Nanny.*

**THE**

Person

THE  
BLIND WOMAN OF SPA,

A COMEDY,

IN ONE ACT.

*Persons.*

*Mrs. Aglebert, the wife of a Shoemaker.*

*Jennet,*

*Mary,*

*Louisa,*

*Mrs. Aglebert's daughters.*

*Goto, a blind woman.*

*Lady Seymour, an English Lady.*

*Felicia, a French Lady.*

*Father Anthony, a Capuchin Fiar.*

*The SCENE is at the Waters of Spa.*



THE  
BLIND WOMAN OF SPA,  
A COMEDY.

SCENE I.

(The Stage represents a walk.)

*Mrs. Aglebert, Iennet.*

*Mrs. Aglebert* (holding a bundle.)

Let us stop a little, the weather is so fine! —

*Iennet.*

Why are almost at home mother, and if you will give me leave, I will carry the bundle which encumbers you.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

No, no, it is too heavy. It is our provision for to-morrow and Sunday.

E 2

*Iennet.*

68 THE BLIND WOMAN

*Iennet.*

There is nothing but potatoes? —

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Well, Iennet? —

*Iennet.*

For these eighteen months we have had no other food but potatoes.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

My child, when people are poor —

*Iennet.*

You was not so eighteen months ago mother? We made such good bread and pies, and cakes. —

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Ah, if you knew my reasons! — But Iennet, you are too young to comprehend these things.

*Iennet.*

Too young! I am almost fifteen.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Your heart is good, and I will tell you all one of these days.

*Iennet.*

Ah mother! tell me now. —

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Hush, I hear a noise, here are some ladies coming —

*Iennet.*

Ha, mother!

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

What is the matter? —

*Iennet.*

It is she; it is the lady that gave my sisters and me, our new gowns.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Did you not go and thank her this morning?

*Iennet.*

Yes, mother.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Now let us begone! and the father as our poor blind girl Goto has not had a walk to day, and I dare say is in expectation of your coming. Come, you shall lead her to the Capuchin garden, where I will join you when my work is done. Come then. —

*Iennet.*

I will follow you mother. (*Mrs. Aglebert goes before, Iennet slackens her pace. Lady Seymour and Felicia pass by her, without observing her. Iennet looks at Felicia, and says.*) She did not see me; I am sorry for it, because I greatly love her. (*She runs to overtake her mother.*)

## SCENE II.

*Lady Seymour, Felicia.**Lady Seymour.*

There is no moving a step in this place without meeting some unhappy wretches! — It grieves me to the heart. —

*Felicia.*

You have such sensibility! — besides, I think in general the English women are more compassionate than we; they have less whim, less coquetry; and coquetry stifles and destroys every worthy sentiment.

*Lady Seymour.*

What you said just now reminds me of an incident with which I was struck this morning. You know the Viscountess Roselle?

*Felicia.*

A little.

*Lady Seymour.*

I met her about two hours ago in the square; there was a poor old lame beggar asked her for charity, and told her his family were dying for want and hunger. The Viscountess hearkened to him with compassion, and pulling her purse out of her pocket was going to give it to him; when unfortunately a person with caps and feathers to sell, drew near. He opened the bandbox, and the Viscountess no longer heard the

the complaint of the old man, but with coldness and inattention. However, to get rid of him, she threw him a trifle and purchased the whole contents of the band-box.

*Felicia.*

I am sure your Ladyship relieved the old man.

*Lady Seymour.*

Hear me to the end. The poor man picked up the money, exclaiming: My wife and my children shall not die this day! These few words kindled some emotions in the heart of the Viscountess which is naturally good and humane; she called back the old man, and after a moment's reflexion, said to the person with whom she had been dealing, you may charge me more for these things I have just now taken, but you must give me credit; the proposal was accepted, and the purse given to the unhappy old man, whose joy and surprise had almost made him expire at the feet of his benefactress. Seated under a tree and concealed by the covered walk, I could easily attend to this interesting scene, which has furnished me with abundant matter for reflexion.

*Felicia.*

You should take a journey to Paris, and since you are fond of making reflexions, we will supply you with many other subjects. You will there see for instance, that we value ourselves on imitating you



## THE BLIND WOMAN

in every thing, except one, I mean benevolence. We carry all your fashions to the extreme, we take to your customs and manners; but we have not yet adopted that generous custom universally established with you, to raise subscriptions for encouraging merit, or relieving the distressed.

*Lady Seymour.*

So you mimic rather than imitate us, since you make no mention of what renders us truly valuable; and by overdoing our customs and manners, you turn us into ridicule.

*Felicia.*

I hope in time you will communicate some of your virtues to us, as you have already given us your manners. But, my lady, to continue this conversation more at our ease, will you go to the mountain where we shall find shade?

*Lady Seymour.*

I cannot, for I must wait the coming of a person whom I appointed to meet me here.

*Felicia.*

Will your business delay you long?

*Lady Seymour.*

No, I have but one word to say. Ha, here he comes!

*Felicia.*

*Felicia.*

So, it is Father Anthony! I can guess the motive for such an appointment. You want to be informed where you can best do a generous action, and for such a purpose the venerable Father Anthony is worthy of your confidence. Farewell my Lady, I shall expect you on the mountain.

*Lady Seymour.*

Where shall I find you.

*Felicia.*

In the little temple.

*Lady Seymour.*

I will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

*(Felicia goes out.)*

### SCENE III.

*Lady Seymour, Father Anthony.*

*Lady Seymour.*

Poor Father Anthony, with how much pain he walks; what a pity he is so old, he has an excellent heart! — Good day to you Father Anthony; I have been waiting for you an hour.

*Father Anthony* *(a nosegay in his hand.)*

I did not care to leave home without a little nosegay for your Ladyship, and I had not a rose!

but at last one of our brothers gave me a couple. — These carnations however are from my own garden.

*Lady Seymour.*

They are very fine.

*Father Anthony.*

O, as to carnations I fear no body — without boasting I have the finest carnations! but my lady you have not been to see my Garden since I have had carnations in blow!

*Lady Seymour.*

I will certainly go. But in your public garden there is always such a number of people, and I am so infociable. — But Father Anthony let us talk of our affairs. — Have you found out a family for me that are very poor, and very worthy? —

*Father Anthony.*

I have found one — Ah! my Lady I have found a treasure: — a woman, her husband, five children, and in such want! —

*Lady Seymour.*

What employment is the husband?

*Father Anthony.*

He is a shoemaker, and his wife makes linen; but she is a woman of such piety and virtue. She is the daughter of a schoolmaster; she reads and writes; she has had an education for her station in life. Then if you knew the charity of which these people

people are capable, and the good they have done.  
Ah, my Lady they richly deserve your fifty guineas.

*Lady Seymour.*

You give me great pleasure, Father; — well! —

*Father Anthony.*

O, it is a long history. In the first place the husband's name is Aglebert. — But will you go to his house — you must witness it to believe all, —

*Lady Seymour.*

Hear me father; come back to this place in two hours, and we will go together to these good people, but in the meantime tell me their history in two words.

*Father Anthony.*

In two words! — It would take me three quarters of an hour for the bare preamble; and what is more, I never could tell any thing in two words.

*Lady Seymour.*

So I find. Well father, farewell till the evening, I hear people coming towards us, and we shall be interrupted.

*Father Anthony.*

And for my part, I have some little business; but I will be here with you by seven.

*Lady Seymour.*

You will find me here. Farewell Father Anthony.

*Father*

*Father Anthony* (makes some steps and returns.)

My Lady, you will come and see my carnations won't you?

*Lady Seymour.*

Yes, Father Anthony, I promise you, you may depend upon it.

*Father Anthony.*

O they are the worthiest people!

*Lady Seymour.*

Who your carnations.

*Father Anthony.*

No, I was speaking of the worthy Aglebert. It is a family of God. (He moves some steps, turns back, and speaks with an air of confidence.) Then I have one variegated red and white; 'tis a non-such in Spa.

*Lady Seymour.*

I will certainly go and see it to-morrow.

*Father Anthony* (in going out.)

Farewell my Lady; what a worthy action you are going to do this evening! —

(He goes out.)

*Lady Seymour.*

The Agleberts and the carnations make extraordinary confusion in his brain. To relieve the poor, and cultivate his flowers, make the sum of his pleasures and his happiness. The greatest virtues are

always



always accompanied with the most simple desires. But I must go and find Felicia. — Ha, what a sweet pretty girl! —

SCENE IV.

*Lady Seymour, Iennet, Goto, Mary.*

*Iennet*, (leading Goto in the bottom of the stage, where she stops and sits down. Mary her sister comes forward to look at Lady Seymour.

*Mary.*

No, it is not she.

*Lady Seymour* (looking at her.)

She is charming. — Come hither my little dear; what are you looking for.

*Mary* (making a courtesy.)

It is that — I took you for a very good Lady, and who is likewise very amiable, and I find I am mistaken.

*Lady Seymour.*

But perhaps I am good too, as well as your Lady.

*Mary* (shaking her head.)

Oh! —

*Lady Seymour.*

You do not believe it?

*Mary.*

The Lady gave me a gown.

*Lady*

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*Lady Seymour.*

O, that is another affair. — Is that it you have now?

*Mary.*

Yes madam, and then I have a fine cap which I shall wear on Sunday. And my sifter Ienner, and my sifter Louisa have new gowns.

*Lady Seymour.*

And all from the good Lady?

*Mary.*

Yes, indeed.

*Lady Seymour.*

What is her name?

*Mary.*

I never saw her till this morning, and I have forgot her name, but she is a French lady, and lodges at the Prince Eugene.

*Lady Seymour.*

O 'tis Felicia — And are your sisters as pretty as you?

*Mary.*

There is Ienner below.

*Lady Seymour.*

That young girl who sits knitting?

*Mary.*

Yes, that is she.

*Lady*

*Lady Seymour.*

Who is that with her?

*Mary.*

It is Goto, our blind woman.

*Lady Seymour.*

Who is your blind woman?

*Mary.*

Marry our blind woman, as my mother calls her, whom we walk with, and lead about. As to me, I have only led her these three months, because I was too little, and still I am not allowed to lead her in the streets for fear of the crowd.

*Lady Seymour.*

She is surely one of your relations.

*Mary.*

Yes, a relation very possibly. I don't know, but my mother loves her as much as she loves us; for she sometimes calls her, her sixth child.

*Lady Seymour.*

It is very right to take care of relations, especially when they are infirm. - What is your name?

*Mary.*

Mary, at your service.

*Lady Seymour.*

Well Mary, come and see me to-morrow morning, I live upon the terrace at the large white house, and bring

## THE BLIND WOMAN

bring your blind woman with you, I shall be very glad to be acquainted with her.

*Mary.*

O Goto is a very good girl,

*Lady Seymour.*

Farewell Mary till to-morrow. (*She goes out.*)

### SCENE V.

*Mary, Iennet, Goto.*

*Mary.*

Here is another good Lady. — I'll lay a wager she will have a gown made for Goto; she loves blind people, I see that — I am very glad of it. I shall keep my pretty apron, but if it had not been for this I would have given it to Goto. — Ah! there they come. — They want to know what the lady said to me.

*Iennet.*

Mary tell us who that fine lady is, that was talking with you.

*Mary.*

Is she not a pretty lady? She lives upon the terrace; I shall go there to-morrow and lead Goto with me.

*Iennet.*

Not alone, there are too many streets.

*Mary.*

*Mary.*

Yes to be sure, and in the streets too. The fine lady said I was tall enough to do that. She knows these things very well, perhaps.

*Goto.*

Mary, you are not strong enough to support me.

*Mary.*

O, to be sure — but it is because you love Iennet better than me — that is not fair.

*Goto.*

Alas! my children, I love you equally, you are all so charitable!

*Iennet.*

Well Mary, I will only lead Goto through the streets without entering the lady's house. —

*Mary.*

No, no, you shall come with us: don't be uneasy, but going along the road, Goto shall likewise lean upon me. Let her promise me that, and I shall be satisfied.

*Goto.*

Yes Mary, yes my girl. — Poor dears, God will bless you all.

*Mary.*

By the by, Goto, are you our relation? The lady asked me; and I did not know what answer to make.

F

*Goto.*



*Goto.*

Alas! I am nothing to you, and I owe you every thing — But heaven will reward you.

*Mary.*

What is it then you owe us Goto? — Is it, that it is a trouble to us to take care of you! It is with such good will. O! I wish I was but big enough to dress, serve, and lead you, like my mother and Jennet. —

*Jennet, (aside to Mary.)*

Hold your tongue, you vex her; I believe she is crying. —

*Mary, (going to the other side of Goto taking her by the hand.)*

Goto, my dear Goto, have I said any thing that gives you pain? are you offended?

*Goto.*

On the contrary my dear children, your good hearts make me forget all my sorrows.

*Mary.*

O! we are very happy then. — But I hear my mother's voice, it is she and Louisa.

## SCENE VI.

*Mary, Jennet, Goto, Mrs. Aglebert, Louisa.*

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

There they are. — Jennet, we were looking for you; come, it is time to go home.

*Jennet.*

*Iennet.*

O mother, allow us to work here half an hour longer.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Very well, I have no objection. Mary go and fetch my wheel, and bring some work for yourself at the same time. *(Mary goes out.)*

*Louisa.*

And for me mother?

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

You shall stay with Goto, in case she wants any thing; you shall execute her commissions. You must accustom yourself to be of use as well as your sisters. Come let us sit down. *(She draws a form and sits down: she takes Goto by the hand and places her between herself and Iennet.)*

*Louisa (to Iennet.)*

Sister give me your place, I must be there to serve Goto.

*Mr. Aglebert.*

Sit down on the ground by her.

*Louisa.*

With all my heart. *(She places herself upon her knees at Goto's feet.)*

*Iennet.*

Mother there is your wheel. *(Mary gives her mother the wheel, who begins immediately to spin: Iennet knits: Mary sits upon a large stone in the corner near the form,*

## THE BLIND WOMAN

by the side of her mother, and hems a handkerchief; and Louisa takes some violets out of the pocket of her apron to make a nosegay.)

*Mrs. Anglebert* (after a short silence.)

Mary, is your father come home?

*Mary.*

No mother.

*Iennet.*

Is he not gone to the capuchin convent?

*Mrs. Anglebert.*

Yes, to speak with Father Anthony.

*Mary.*

O, Father Anthony has fine carnations!

*Louisa* (crying.)

Ah Goto, you have thrown down all my violets by your turning, on the ground.

*Goto.*

Forgive me my dear child. — I could not see them.

*Louisa* (still crying.)

My God, my violets. —

*Mrs. Anglebert.*

What is the matter little girl?

*Louisa.*

Mary, she has thrown down all my violets. So she may gather them up, and that too. (She throws away the nosegay she had begun, in a passion.)

*Iennet.*

*Jennet.*

O fy, Louisa.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Louisa, come hither. (*Louisa rises, and Mrs. Aglebert takes her between her knees.*) Louisa are you angry with Goro?

*Louisa.*

Yes, she has thrown down my violets.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

We shall talk of that by and by, but in the first place, take my wheel and carry it home.

*Louisa.*

With all my heart mother. — O, it is too heavy, I cannot even lift it.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Well Louisa, I will no longer love you, since you cannot carry my wheel.

*Louisa (crying.)*

But mother, I have not strength; is it my fault?

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

So you think, I am wrong to desire it?

*Louisa.*

Yes mother you are wrong. And then you know very well that I am too little to carry that great ugly wheel.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

It is very true I know it; but don't you likewise know that Goto is blind? Can she see your flowers, and can she help you to gather them up?

*Louisa.*

Well I was wrong to cry, and to be provoked with her.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Is she not sufficiently unhappy, poor girl, not to see; to be blind from her birth?

*Goto (taking Mrs. Aglebert by the hand.)*

A! Mrs. Aglebert, I am not unhappy; no, your goodness, your charity, —

*Mr. Aglebert.*

Don't speak of that, my dear girl. — Hear my Louisa, if you do not look upon Goto as your sister, I will no longer look upon you as my child.

*Louisa.*

I love Goto very well, but however, she is, not my sister.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

It pleased God to make this poor girl fall quite helpless into my hands; was it not to say to me, there is a sixth child which I give you?

*Tennet.*

O yes, just the same thing.

*Mary.*

I likewise can conceive that,

*Mrs.*



*Mrs. Aglebert.*

And Louisa too will be able to convey it in time: goodness of heart must come with reason. My dear children there is no such thing as content, without a good heart; I repeat it to you, and desire you will remember it. Your father and I have worked hard, and have had a great deal of trouble, but by always doing our duty, life passes smoothly? and then one good action consoles us for ten years of toil and vexation.

*Mary.*

Mother, I think I hear some ladies coming.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Very well, let us be gone.

*Iennet.*

Mother, mother, it is the French Lady.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

No matter, let us go home. Come, put back the bench. *(They all rise.)*

SCENE VII.

*Mary, Iennet, Goto, Louisa, Mrs. Aglebert, Lady Seymour, Felicia.*

*Lady Seymour.*

Father Anthony is not yet come. — Ha! there are the young girls, of whom we were just now speaking.

*Felicia, (to Jennet.)*

Is that your mother?

*Mrs. Aglebert, (making a courtesy.)*

Yes Madam — and I proposed to go to morrow to thank you, madam, for your goodness to my children, but I have been so busy yesterday and to-day. —

*Felicia.*

This blind girl is one of your family, no doubt?

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

No madam.

*Goto.*

No, but it is the same thing.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Jennet, take my wheel. — Let us go, lest we disturb the ladies. —

*Lady Seymour.*

I beg you will not go away. — I have something to say to you. (*aside to Felicia.*) She seems to dread our questions about the blind woman. It is somewhat singular.

*Felicia, (low to Lady Seymour.)*

I made the same remark. (*Aloud to Mrs. Aglebert.*) What is your situation in life, your business.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

I spin and make linen.

*Lord*

*Lady Seymour.*

And is your work sufficient to support your family?

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Yes, madam, we have wherewithal to live.

*Felicia.*

That day however when I met your daughters on Annette and Lubin's hill, I was equally struck with the poverty which was evident from their dress, and with their charming figures. — And you yourself don't seem to be in a more prosperous state.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

It is true we are not rich, but we are content.

*Lady Seymour, (to Felicia.)*

Does not she interest you?

*Felicia.*

Beyond expression. — (to Mrs. Aglebert.) You have three charming little girls there. — (All the three courtesy.) Have you any more children?

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

I have two boys likewise, thank God.

*Goto.*

And I, whom she entirely supports. —

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Ah Goto! —

*Lady Seymour.*

How! —

F 5

*Goto.*

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*Goto.*

It is to these worthy people, I owe every thing. This family of Angels, lodge, feed, clothe and serve me, who am a poor infirm girl, is frequently sick, and always useless. I find in them a father, mother, brothers, sisters and servants, for they are all equally disposed to do good offices, all equally good, equally charitable. Ah ladies, they are angels, real angels whom you see before you.

*Felicia.*

What, is it possible! — O Heavens!

*Lady Seymour.*

Surprise and compassion have struck me motionless.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

My God! what we have done, was so natural! — This good girl had no other resource; we could comfort and help her; could it be possible to abandon her? —

*Mary, (aside to Jennet.)*

Why are these ladies so very uneasy at this? See, they are in tears.

*Jennet.*

It is because they are surprised at it; but however there is no reason.

*Felicia.*

Be so good as to let us know the particulars of such an affecting story.

*Lady*

*Lady Seymour* (to Mrs. Aglebert.)

How did this poor girl fall into your hands?

*Goto.*

We lodged in the same house, when an old aunt of mine, who took care of me, and upon whose labour I subsisted, happened to die, and with her, I lost every means of support. I fell sick, and this dear good woman came to see me; she began by sitting up with me, paying a doctor for me, making my drinks, in short, serving me as my nurse. When I recovered she took me home to her house, where I have been treated these two years as if I had been the eldest daughter of the family.

*Felicia,* (embracing Mrs. Aglebert.)

O incomparable woman, with such a soul into what a condition has your destiny placed you.

*Lady Seymour.*

Let me too embrace her.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Ladies, you make me ashamed —

*Lady Seymour* (to Mrs. Aglebert.)

Tell us your name, that respectable name, which shall never be effaced from our remembrance.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

My name is Catharine Aglebert.

*Lady*



*Lady Seymour.* 2 *what*

Aglebert! — It is she whom Father Anthony mentioned to me. — Do you know Father Anthony?

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Yes Madam, he came to our house this morning, and this evening has sent for my husband, but I don't know what he wants with him.

*Goto.*

I saw him yesterday at the Capuchin Gardens; he asked me some questions, and I told him my whole story.

*Felicia.*

But how comes it that your story is not known to all the people in Spa? How is it possible that such an instance of virtue and benevolence should remain unknown.

*Goto.*

Because Mr. and Mrs. Aglebert have never mentioned it; besides I am frequently sick, and of course confined to the house a part of the year, and Fenner, who takes care of me, leads me, by her mother's desire, to the walks which are the least frequented; and when she observes people coming, she leads me a different way. It is only when she is greatly hurried with her work, that I am taken to the garden of the Capuchins, which is near at hand

hand, and that has only happened three or four times.

*Lady Seymour* (to *Felicia*.)

Here is virtue in all its lustre, and we enjoy the inexpressible happiness of discovering and contemplating it in all its purity. Simple, sublime, natural; without vanity, without ostentation, and finding within itself, both its glory and its reward.

*Felicia.*

Ah! who can see it in this light without paying their adorations? Who can look upon this woman without feeling a delightful emotion of respect and admiration?

*Lady Seymour.*

And that conformity of disposition, that general agreement for the good of the whole family! — And that girl, the affecting and virtuous object of so many kindnesses, how she expresses her gratitude, how she is penetrated with whatever she ought to feel? — No, nothing is wanting to complete the delightful picture.

*Mary.*

O mother, I think I see Father Anthony. —

*Louisa.*

I am glad of it, for he always gives me a violet.

*Lady*

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*Lady Seymour.*

Stay Mrs. Aglebert, and we will go home with you presently.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Madam, —

SCENE VIII.

*Mary, Jennet, Goto, Louisa, Mrs. Aglebert, Lady Seymour, Felicia, Father Anthony.*

*Lady Seymour.*

Come, Father Anthony, come, I fancy I have discovered the treasure you spoke of to me. —

*Father Anthony.*

Just so, there they are; it is Mrs. Aglebert. Well then my Lady, you know her history? —

*Lady Seymour.*

I know all.

*Father Anthony (to Mrs. Aglebert.)*

Mrs. Aglebert, learn to know and thank your benefactress. Lady Seymour wanted to give fifty guineas to the most worthy family in Spa, and her choice has fallen upon yours.

*Goto (raising her hands to Heaven.)*

O my God! —

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Fifty guineas! — No, madam, it is too much; there are a number of worthy people in Spa. still more needy than we. My neighbour Mrs. Savard is a worthy woman, and in such misery! —

*Lady Seymour.*

Very well, I will take care of Mrs. Savard, I promise you. — Father Anthony shall give you fifty guineas this night, and I will add a hundred more, as a portion for Jennet.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

O my Lady, it is too much — it is too much indeed. —

*Goto.*

O God! is it possible — O where is this good Lady, that I may embrace her knees. — Jennet where is she? — (*Jennet leads her to Lady Seymour's feet.*)

*Felicia.*

Poor girl, how affecting to see her! — And you my Lady, you must be happy! —

*Goto, (laying hold of Lady Seymour's robe.)*

Is this she? —

*Lady Seymour, (reaching her hand to Goto.)*

Yes my girl! —

*Goto, (throwing herself at her feet.)*

Ah madam, I will pray for you all the days of my life. You have made the fortune of this respectable

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stable family, but you have done still more for me. I owe to you their content, and the only happiness poor Goto can find upon earth, which is the knowledge of these worthy people being made as happy as they deserve. I have nothing more to wish, and now I can die satisfied.

*Lady Seymour, (raising her up and embracing her.)*

O, I conceive your happiness, and enjoy it with transport.

*Mrs. Aglabert.*

We shall all join, madam, in our prayers to heaven for you, while we live.

*Jennet.*

O yes indeed.

*Mary.*

And with all our hearts.

*Louisa.*

And I too.

*Lady Seymour.*

Pray then that it may preserve to me a feeling heart; you prove to me that it is the most precious gift heaven can bestow.

*Father Anthony.*

My lady, I just now came past vauxhall, where they are playing and dancing, but I will wager, the pleasures of the people who are there, are not equal to those you have been just now tasting.

*Felicia.*



*Felicia.*

How they are to be pitied, if the happiness we have been enjoying is unknown to them? —

*Lady Seymour.*

Come, let us go home with Mrs. Aglebert, I am impatient to see her husband. —

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Madam, you are very good, but we live so high! —

*Lady Seymour.*

Come and conduct us; with what pleasure shall I enter that house, which contains such virtuous inhabitants?

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

My God, Father Anthony, speak for us: I am so surprised, so affected I do not know how to express myself. —

*Father Anthony.*

Come, come, my Lady's heart can see into yours. — But Mrs. Aglebert, there is one favour you must obtain for me with my Lady, it is to come and see my garden when she leaves you.

*Lady Seymour.*

That is but just, and I promise you I will.

*Father Anthony.*

My lady, you very well deserve the finest carnation in the whole town, and — you shall have it this night.

G

*Mrs.*

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*Mrs. Aglebert.*

— If I durst offer my arm to the ladies. —

*Lady Seymour.*

With all my heart, my dear Mrs. Aglebert.

*Mrs. Aglebert.*

Jennet and Mary, take care of Goto,

*Felicia.*

— Come, let us lose no time, let us go to see the man who is worthy of such a wife and such children. (They go out with Father Anthony: Goto and the three little girls let them go on before.)

*Goto.*

May God bestow his richest blessings on that good lady!

*Mary.*

How amiable she is!

*Jennet.*

— Is it possible to be so good and not be beautiful — Now they are past — come let us follow them — O my father, how happy shall I be to witness his joy!

THE END.

THE

THE  
TWO FRIENDS,  
A DRAMA,

IN ONE ACT.

Palmer, Captain of a Ship.  
Hewes, Captain upon Guard.  
Guard.

THE SCENE lays in Montgomery's Palace.

*Persons.*

*Dionysius, Tyrant of Syracuse.*

*Damon, | two Friends.*

*Pythias, |*

*Gelon, Dionysius's Favourite.*

*Palinur, Captain of a Ship.*

*Argus, Captain upon Guard.*

*Guards.*

*THE SCENE lays in Dionysius's Palace.*

THE TWO FRIENDS

Dionysius

Who dies to day, let his life (leave out his subject)  
And fight, this is the day, on which the Greek  
Damon should return.

THE  
TWO FRIENDS,  
A DRAMA.

SCENE I.

Dionysius, Gelon, Argus.

Dionysius.

To day my friend, will I inhabit this room. Do  
you Argus, give out the report that I have taken  
possession of the opposite side of my palace.

Argus.

I will Sir.

Gelon.

Must then the most gracious, the best of princes  
continually be obliged to hide himself on account  
of his ungrateful subjects!



# 102 THE TWO FRIENDS.

*Dionysius.*

Who dies to day? let me see, (*takes out his tablets.*)  
Ah! right, this is the day, on which the Grecian  
Damon should return.

*Gelon.*

He certainly will not.

*Dionysius.*

If he did, at least it would be as wonderful as  
his friend Pythias's giving himself up a prisoner, as se-  
curity. Yet, I will not be trifled with. If Damon  
does not appear to day, the foolish Pythias pays for  
him with his life.

*Argus.*

When I visited the prisons to day, he intreated  
me to procure him an audience this morning.

*Gelon.*

He would sue for a reprieve I suppose, not think-  
ing his friend would so long delay his return. The  
subtle cheat gave out, he only wished to embrace  
his relations before his death, and in this time he  
could have made the journey to Corinth thrice.

*Dionysius.*

I have now no time to give an audience to a  
malefactor. I am going to my daughter to have my  
beard singed by her. *Gelon*, wait for me here, and  
do you *Argus* execute my orders. (*Exit Dionysius.*  
*Argus* going off on the opposite side of the stage is stop-  
ped by *Gelon*.)

SCENE

## THE TWO FRIENDS. 103

### SCENE II.

*Gelon, Argus.*

*Gelon,*

A moment Argus.

*Argus.*

You know Sir that I dare not tarry.

*Gelon,*

That was just what I would beg of you, return as soon as possible to the palace, and let no one in who under the pretence of imploring Pythias's pardon may make an attempt upon the life of the king.

*Argus.*

Who will have the courage, to intercede for this infortunate man? I must own to you however that I pity his fate as much as I admire his generosity.

*Gelon.*

You are deceived by appearances Argus, Pythias is a cunning cheat, who through a false heroism hoped to appease the king, and save the life of his friend.

*Argus.*

It may be so Sir; but surely his friendship has made him venture much.

*Gelon.*

And he would not have done that, had he not feared that Damon in the agony of torture, would have impeached him as an accomplice in his treachery.

G 4

*Argus.*

## 304 THE TWO FRIENDS:

*Argus.*

Damon himself was not convicted.

*Gelon.*

His crime is a secret which I keep locked up in my Breast, and the Welfare of the State requires even that we should not examine matters. You see of what consequence it is, that even the confident of this guilty man does not escape the punishment he deserves.

*Argus.*

Your commands Sir, shall be obeyed. *(Exit Argus.)*

### SCENE III.

*Gelon (alone.)*

In a few hours shall I be rid of the last virtuous man in Syracuse; The fool has delivered himself up to execution. I wished only to deprive the strange Damon of his inheritance, now I can in the same time revenge myself on the haughty Pythias. He shall learn what it is to despise the favourite of a tyrant! But whom do I see!

### SCENE IV.

*Gelon, Palinur.*

*Palinur (who looks about him.)*

Welcome, Sir; Are we alone? A few moments since I landed in the port.

*Gelon*

## THE TWO FRIENDS. 105

*Gelon (who embraces him.)*

You come at the wished for hour, dear Palinur;  
Are my commands obeyed?

*Palinur.*

Can Gelon ask this question? Damon is dead, the  
third night after having left this port a terrible storm  
arose which favour'd me in my design.

*Gelon.*

Well?

*Palinur.*

I saw Damon by the glance of lightning kneel  
on the edge of the ship with his hands lifted up to  
heaven. I stepped softly towards him. "O God of  
Gods, he cried, for my own life, do I not intreat  
you but only for that of my friend; Preserve me  
only to release him from the chains that he took  
upon him for love of me. Must we both perish?"  
Yes said I and I gave him a thrust from behind,  
which plunged him to the bottom of the Sea.

*Gelon.*

O my friend! No body could have executed my  
revenge better: The goods of the imprisoned Pythias  
be the reward of this service. But I hear a door  
creak, the king comes: Tell him that Damon would  
not return with you.

106 THE TWO FRIENDS.

SCENE V.

*Gelon, Palinur, Dionysius, Guards.*

*Dionysius.*

What will this stranger have? Lay hold of him.

*Gelon* (*keeping off the Guards.*)

Sire, it is the Seaman Palinur, with whom the treacherous Damon sailed from hence.

*Dionysius.*

Well and has he brought him back again? I scarce expect it.

*Palinur.*

Alas, no Sire, when I landed him at Goriath, he said to me with a scornful smile: "You may sail back to Syracuse, when you will, I shall not follow you; when in my place the credulous Pythias is to execution led, tell him that I salute him."

*Dionysius.*

This charge you may perform; his execution needs no longer be delayed. (*to one of his guards*) Tell Argus to bring Pythias here. (*Exit soldier.*)

*Gelon.*

Sire, my suspicion now you may perceive was right. His being a traitor to his friend is a strong proof he was the same to you. Convict him you could not, yet perhaps Pythias now will speak —

*Dionysius.*

Speak or not he still shall die.

SCENE



THE TWO FRIENDS. 107

SCENE VI.

*Dionysius, Gelon, Palinur, Pythias (in chains.)*

*Argus, the Guard.*

*Dionysius.*

Well Pythias, to day must Damon return to prevent for him your suffering death.

*Pythias.* May I carry this hope to my grave?

Oh! that the evening was but come! yet may heaven from these shores my friend retain, that I may enjoy the satisfaction of dying for him.

*Dionysius.*

That pleasure you may have; Damon will not return.

*Pythias.*

Oh! Dionysius, you transport me. More apprehension have I from the virtue of my friend than from the terror of your executioners.

*Dionysius.*

His virtue you have not to fear. Here is the master of the ship that conveyed him to Corinth. Tell him Palinur the message, he entrusted you with.

*Palinur.*

"You may now," said he laughing, "sail back to Syracuse, I not follow you. When Pythias to execution instead of me is led, tell him that I salute him."

*Pythias.*

108 THE TWO FRIENDS.

*Pythias* (displeased.)

My friend did not speak thus you are at least a wicked slanderer. Damon will yet to day return, or he is no more. Yet no, he lives, heaven will not suffer, the most virtuous of mortals to perish. I remind you of your promise Dionysius, if Damon comes back after my death you will not touch him, May I carry this hope with me to my grave?

*Dionysius.*

Miserable fool! you still believe that Damon is your friend? He is not so silly as yourself; he rejoices now in his heart, to have deceived you.

*Pythias.*

This from your friends you might expect, mine I know better. Would to heaven I could trust as much to your promise, as to his fidelity.

*Gelon.*

What audacity!

*Dionysius.*

I know not, how I bear it, yet, if Damon should come back, I swear, that he shall live.

*Pythias* (throws himself at his feet.)

Let me embrace your knees; the Gods have heard your oath — Oh! Dionysius dare I a second favour beg?

*Dionysius.*

Speak.

*Pythias.*

# THE TWO FRIENDS. 109

*Pythias.*

Order my execution quickly, otherwise my friend might prevent it.

*Dionysius* (to *Gelon*.)

I can almost admire him, (to *Argus*.) Carry him to the place of execution; we will follow in a moment. Order out all my guards, *Argus*.

*Pythias* (going off.)

The Gods be thanked! *Dionysius* do not tarry. What joy! how much honour do I owe to you!  
(Exit *Pythias* attended by *Argus* and the Guards.)

## SCENE VII.

*Dionysius, Gelon, Palinur.*

*Dionysius.*

He is either mad, or the greatest of heroes, had he begged his life, I think, I should have granted it.

*Gelon.*

Oh! mildest of princes; no malefactor has yet thus braved you, and yet your Majesty admires him. Yet your forbearance might soon be dangerous, Sire, the Syracusans might set it forth as fearful weakness and become more disobedient.

*Palinur.*

If *Damon* was guilty, *Pythias* was likewise so; he therefore deserves twice to die.

*Dionysius.*

## 110 THE TWO FRIENDS.

*Dionysius.*

"You are right, but I will not be present at the execution. Go Palinur, and tell them, not to wait for me; relate in the mean time to the populace, what the treacherous Damon said to you."

*Palinur.*

I obey, (*he is going, off but starts back.*)

### SCENE THE LAST.

*Dionysius, Gelon, Palinur, Argus, Damon and Pythias (both in chains,) Guards.*

*Dionysius.*

What do I see?

*Gelon (aside.)*

Curst Palinur.

*Argus.*

Sire, as I was conveying Pythias from the palace, Damon quite out of breath came running toward us. Halt, cried he, here is the man who dies, release my friend, his bail is over. Both contended for death, as if it were for the laurels of victory, and this unexpected incident caused me to bring them both before you.

*Dionysius.*

Is it possible? Dare I believe my eyes?

*Pythias.*

What I feared is come; Ah Dionysius, why was not my execution ordered an hour sooner?

*Damon.*

## THE TWO FRIENDS. III

*Damon.*

The Gods be praised! The blow is yet prevented.  
Ah, my friend Pythias let me once more embrace you.  
(*He embraces Pythias.*)

*Pythias.*

Cruel friend, Ah! Dionysius let my Damon live  
or let us die together.

*Damon.*

You are astonished Dionysius, my wonderful preservation compels you to allow the Gods. When you order'd me to be thrown into the Sea, you did not foresee, that a charitable wave would carry me to a neighbouring Island.

*Pythias.*

O Heavens!

*Damon (to Pythias.)*

Two months I sigh'd in vain for a ship, bound for Sicily. The Gods at length heard my prayers, and last night I landed on a rocky shore, some miles from hence, because I feared my enemy in the port. (*He points to Palinur.*)

*Dionysius.*

What do I hear? confess the truth Palinur, or the severest tortures shall compell thee.

*Palinur.*

Sire, I have simply executed your favourite's orders. Gelon commanded me to throw Damon into the Sea by night time.

*Dionysius (to Gelon.)*

Gelon is that true — you tremble. Ha traitor know ye not, how I punish an abuse of my confidence?

*Damon.*



112 THE TWO FRIENDS.

*Damon.*

How? Dionysius did not command my death?  
Ah Gelon, would you cause the destruction of us  
both?

*Dionysius (after a pause.)*

Damon and Pythias you are both at liberty; from  
you I have nothing to fear, but these villains shall  
die; Argus carry them to execution. (*Damon and  
Pythias throw themselves at the King's feet.*)

*Pythias.*

My Damon is free! Dionysius be blessed; now  
you feel, how excellent it is to be just.

*Damon.*

Be more than just, Dionysius be gracious, and for-  
give these unhappy men.

*Dionysius (winning them with astonishment.)*

What men! (*after a short silence.*) Rise, they shall  
live, I can refuse nothing to your virtue.

*Pythias (to Damon, whom he embraces.)*

Generous friend!

*Damon (to Pythias.)*

But not so generous as yourself.

*Dionysius.*

I am in extasy! O friendship! Why have I not  
known thee. Permit me virtuous men to take off  
your chains and form a third in your alliance.

(*He takes their chains off, and embraces them both.*)

THE END.

THE

Persons

THE

# LITTLE FIDDLER,

A DRAMA,

IN ONE ACT.

## THE TWO FRIENDS.

### Persons.

*Mr. Melfort,*

*Charles,* his Son.

*Sophia,* his Daughter,

*Godfrey,* his Nephew.

*Amelia Richmond,*  
*and Charlotte,* Friends of Sophia.

*Jonas,* the Little Fiddler.

SCENE, *Mr. Melfort's House.*

IN THE LITTLE FIDDLER

(Dramatis Personae)

*Look, you shall have a fiddler.*

*I shall have not begun to do it from this*

*Godfrey.*

*What most is it of THE*

*o'clock this time?*

**LITTLE FIDDLER,**

*You shall see now whether that was possible. At*

*o'clock I shall have a fiddler.*

**A DRAMA,**

*two in the garden, in order to get an appetite for*

*my dinner. We were at table an hour. Then to*

*it do it and have a fiddler.*

*you know how long it takes a fiddler to play the*

*it, as I shall have a fiddler.*

**SCENE I.**

*not for a good deal of exercise to digest it, you*

*Charles and Godfrey.*

*Charles.*

*More, please, had you not to do it now, how?*

**Hark ye, cousin. You must do me a favour.**

*Godfrey.*

*Come, let us see what it is! Thou hast always*

*something or another to ask me.*

*Charles.*

*It is because you are the cleverer of the two.*

*You know the translation of that fable of Phaedrus,*

*that our tutor has given me for a task.*

*Godfrey.*

*What, have you not finished it yet?*

*H s*

*Charles.*

## 116 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Charles.*

How do you think I should have finished it, when I have not begun it?

*Godfrey.*

You have not had time then to do it from twelve o' clock till four?

*Charles.*

You shall see now whether that was possible. At eleven o' clock I could not help taking a turn or two in the garden, in order to get an appetite for my dinner. We were at table an hour. Then to sit down and study immediately after one's meals, you know how dangerous papa's doctor says that is. So, as I had made a hearty dinner, I had occasion for a good deal of exercise to digest it, you know.

*Godfrey.*

Well, now at least you have had exercise enough; and before dark there is more time than you want to finish your task.

*Charles.*

You do not consider that just now I must go to my writing.

*Godfrey.*

But since your writing-master is not come —

*Charles.*

I shall wait for him. It would be spoiling every thing to confound my hours of business.

*Godfrey.*



## THE LITTLE FIDDLER

*Godfrey.*

Well! then, after your writing, you have still some of the afternoon, and the whole evening.

*Charles.*

I shall not have a minute. My sister expects the two Miss Richmonds to come to see her.

*Godfrey.*

It is not on your account that they come.

*Charles.*

No. But then I must help my sister to entertain them.

*Godfrey.*

What will hinder you when the young ladies go away? —

*Charles.*

O yes, indeed! to work by candle-light, and spoil my eyes. Yet my translation must be ready by to-morrow morning.

*Godfrey.*

Well! whether it is or no, what is that to me?

*Charles.*

And would you see me, then, reprimanded by my tutor and my papa?

*Godfrey.*

You always know how to get the better of me. Come, let me see, where is this task?

## THE LITTLE FIDDEER.

*Charles.*

Above stairs in my room on the table. I will go for it, or rather come you along with me.

*Godfrey.*

Do you go first: I shall follow you immediately. I see your sister coming this way. She wanted to speak with me.

*Charles.*

But do not you go and tell her any thing of this; you understand me.

### SCENE II.

*Sophia and Godfrey.*

*Sophia.*

Well, cousin, what have you and my brother been conversing about. He has certainly been playing you one of his old tricks.

*Godfrey.*

No, but he has been making me one of his old requests. He wants me as usual to perform his task for him against to-morrow.

*Sophia.*

And is my papa never to be informed of his idleness.

*Godfrey.*

I shall not undertake that office. You know that ever since your mamma's death, my uncle's health

has

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 119

has been so precarious, that the least emotion makes him ill for some days. Besides, his generosity supports me; and he might think that I wished to hurt your brother in his esteem.

*Sophia.*

Well then, I shall talk to my brother the first opportunity — But do you know what I had to say to you? The Miss Richmonds are coming to see me to-day, and you must assist us in our amusements!

*Godfrey.*

Oh! I shall certainly do my best, cousin.

*Sophia.*

Ah! here they are.

### SCENE III.

*Godfrey, Sophia, Amelia, and Charlotte*

*Richmond.*

*Sophia.*

Ah! how do you do, my dear Friends! (*They salute each other, and curtsy to Godfrey, who bows to them.*)

*Charlotte.*

It seems an age since I saw you last.

*Amelia.*

Indeed it is a long time.

*Sophia.*

I believe it is more than three weeks. (*Godfrey draws out the table, and gives them chairs.*)

H 4

*Charlotte.*

## 120 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Charlotte.* Do not give yourself so much trouble, Master

*Godfrey.*

*Godfrey.* Miss, I only do my duty.

*Sophia.* Oh! I am very sure Godfrey does it with pleasure.

(*gives him her hand.*) I wish my brother had a little of his complaisance.

### SCENE IV.

*Godfrey, Sophia, Amelia, Charlotte, Charles.*

*Charles.* (without taking notice of the Miss Richmonds.)

This is very pretty of you, Godfrey, to let me wait so long while you are playing the fine gentleman.

*Godfrey.*  
I thought I should be the last person in the company to whom you would direct your compliments.

*Charles.*  
Oh! do not be angry, ladies; I shall be at your service presently.

*Amelia.*  
Oh, pray do not hurry yourself, Mr. Charles. (Charles takes Godfrey aside, and while the young ladies converse together, draws a paper from his pocket, which he gives him.)

*Charles.*

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER 121

*Charles.*

There it is; you understand me.

*Godfrey.*

Six lines! a great task indeed! are not you ashamed.

*Charles.*

Hift! hold your tongue.

*Godfrey.*

Ladies, if you give me leave, I will just step out for a few minutes.

*Charlotte.*

Who shall expect your return with impatience.

*Sophia.*

Since you are going out, cousin, pray bid Lenny bring us in tea.

### SCENE V.

*Charles, Sophia, Amelia, Charlotte.*

*Charles* (throwing himself into a arm-chair.)

Soh! I shall take possession of this.

*Sophia.*

I think it would have been civil to ask leave.

*Charles.*

Your leave, perhaps?

*Sophia.*

I am not the only person here.

H 5

*Charlotte.*



## 132 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Charlotte.*

I see your brother counts us as nothing.

*Amelia.*

He thinks certainly that he does us a great deal of honour in keeping us company.

*Charles.*

Oh! I know that you could do without my company; but I could not so easily deprive myself of yours.

*Sophia.*

There at least is the appearance of a compliment. Though I believe, to say the truth, the tea should come in for the greatest part of it.

*Charles.*

You are very right, my dear sister, in not thinking that I stay at least on your account.

*Sophia.*

Oh! as to that, I have too humble an opinion of my own merit. All that I should take pride in, is, that I am sister to so polite a young gentleman.  
(*Immy brings the tea, and sets it before Sophia.*)

*Charles.*

Let me pour it out, pray do.

*Sophia.*

No, no, that is my business; you are a little too awkward. If you want to do something, hand these ladies their cups.

*Amelia.*

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 123

*Amelia.*

Not so much sugar for me.

*Sophia.*

Help yourself, my dear, to your liking. (hands her a cup, and the sugar bason, Charles takes a cup for himself, and gets hold of the sugar.) Charles, you have got three great lumps already.

*Charles.*

Why, that is not too much. I like it pretty sweet. (takes several bits one after another, till his sister gets the sugar bason out of his hands.)

*Sophia.*

Are not you ashamed, brother? You see there will be none left for us.

*Charles.*

Well, do not you know the way to the sugar canister?

*Sophia.*

My brother would think he had done wrong if he saved his sister any trouble.

*Charles.*

No; but if you went for it, I should have the pleasure of being alone with these ladies.

*Amelia.*

Do you hear that, Sophia? Now will you say that your brother is not perfectly polite?

*Sophia.*

## 124 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Sophia* (having collected all the cups before her, and filled them again.)

Charles, hand Amelia this cup. (*Charles takes the cup, and in handing it to Amelia, spills the tea upon her slip. — They all rise hastily.*)

*Sophia.*

There is an instance of his politeness. (*aside to Charles.*)

I dare swear, thou ill-natured creature, that was done on purpose.

*Amelia.*

O dear! what will my mamma say! and what shall we do?

*Charlotte.*

This is only the second time she has had on this slip. Make haste, a glass of clean water.

*Sophia.*

No; I have heard that it is better to rub it with a dry linen cloth. Here is a handkerchief quite clean. (*They go to assist Amelia. Charlotte holds her slip, and Sophia rubs it. Meantime Charles remains at table, quite unconcerned, drinking his tea.*)

*Charlotte.*

There, it begins to disappear: you must let it dry.

*Amelia.*

By good luck, it is in a fold where one will not think of looking.

*Charles* (*aside.*)

That is not my fault.

*Sophia.*

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER 125

*Sophia.*

There, look now, Charlotte, I do not think it will be observed.

*Charlotte.*

If I had not seen the spot before. —

*Amelia.*

Very true. However, Mr. Charles, another time I shall beg you to spare yourself the trouble of waiting on me.

*Sophia.*

Come, ladies, let us take our places again. (Going to pour out the tea, she finds the tea-pot empty, looks angrily at Charles.) Well, this is a piece of ill manners that I could not have imagined. Would ye believe it, ladies? while we were so much concerned, he has taken all the tea. However, stop a moment, I will go and order more.

*Charlotte.*

No, there has been quite enough; I could not drink another drop.

*Amelia.*

The misfortune of my slip has taken away my thirst.

*Charles.*

But I beg you will make no ceremony. They can soon bring us more.

*Amelia.*

## 116 THE LITTLE FIDDLER

*Sophia* *Amelia?*  
Really! I think you should have known before-hand that your brother was to be one of the company.

*Sophia.*  
Those who are not invited should at least wait until it were their turn.

*Charlotte.*  
Let us not say any more about it. It does not give me the least concern.

*Sophia.*  
Well, what shall we do now? Ah, here is our friend Godfrey. He will help us to fix on some amusement.

*Charles.* *(mimicks her.)*  
Our friend Godfrey! — But ladies I must speak to him before you. *(Goes to meet Godfrey, while the young ladies are conversing together.)*

### SCENE VI.

*Amelia, Charlotte, Sophia, Godfrey,*

*Charles.*  
*Charles* *(to Godfrey.)*

Well, have you done it?

*Godfrey.*  
There; take it, and blush for your idleness. —  
Well, Ladies, have you fixed upon any amusement?

*Amelia.*



## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 127

*Amelia.*

No, we waited for you to determine us.

*Godfrey.*

I have got a little musician below stairs at your service. If you give me leave, I will call him up to sing you a song, or to play if you chuse to dance.

*Sophia.*

A little musician! where is he? where is he?

*Charlotte.*

We must own that Master Godfrey knows how to amuse his company.

*Godfrey.*

At the same time that we amuse ourselves, we shall do an act of charity; for the poor little fellow has no livelihood but his violin.

*Charles.*

And who will pay him? Master Godfrey? He talks and acts as if the King were his cousin, and he has not a farthing all the while.

*Sophia.*

Are you not ashamed, brother?

*Godfrey.*

Let him go on, cousin, he does not offend me. It is no crime to be poor. I am the liker my little musician, who is for all that a very good boy. I will give him six-pence that I have remaining in my

# 128 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

my purse; and he has promised to play for that all the evening.

*Charlotte.*

We will make a collection to pay him.

*Amelia.*

Yes, yes; we shall club.

*Godfrey.*

Shall I go for him? he waits below at the door.

*Sophia.*

By all means, my dear cousin, and make haste.  
(*Godfrey goes out; mean time Lemmy brings in a cake upon a plate.*)

## SCENE VII.

*Amelia, Charlotte, Sophia, Charles.*

(*Charles goes to take the plate from Lemmy.*)

*Sophia prevents him.*

*Charles.*

I was only going to cut it up.

*Sophia.*

I shall save you the trouble; you would cut it up so well, I suppose, that we should have no more of the cake than we had of the tea. (*She divides it, and hands it round.*)

*Charles* (*after taking his share.*)

Who is to have the piece that is left?

*Sophia.*

THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 129

*Sophia.*

What! is my cousin to have none?

*Amelia.*

I would rather give him my part.

*Charlotte.*

And I mine.

*Charles. (with a sneer.)*

He is exceedingly happy.

*Sophia.*

Can you see nothing but his cake to envy him?

SCENE VIII.

*Amelia, Charlotte, Sophia, Charles, Godfrey, (leading in Ionas by the hand, who has his violin under his arm.)*

*Godfrey.*

Give me leave to present you my young performer.

*Charlotte and Amelia.*

He is a smart little fellow.

*Sophia.*

Where do you come from, my man?

*Ionas.*

I come from the wolds of Yorkshire, Ma'am.

*Amelia.*

La! what has made you come thus far?

*Ionas.*

## 130 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Jonas.*

Because my poor father is blind, and cannot work. So we travel the country, and I support him with my fiddle.

*Sophia.*

Well, will you give us a specimen of your performance?

*Jonas.*

That I will with all my heart: but my skill is not very great.

*Godfrey.*

Play your best; at any rate it will be well enough for me, and these ladies will be so good as to pardon you if you should play a little out of tune. (*Jonas tunes his violin. Amelia in the mean time taking the plate, presents the remainder of the cake to Godfrey. He bows, takes the plate, and holds it in his hand without touching the cake, while he listens to Jonas. The latter begins by playing the air of the following song; then sings.*)

### I.

Pity the early hardships of a boy

Whose tender hands maintain an helpless fire;

Alas! no other means can he employ,

But that compassion which their wants inspire.

### II.

Pity their lot, who would not importune,

Chill penury implores their scanty boon;

Long years of toil have dimm'd the fathers eyes,

The other's weakness that resource denies,

### III.

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 131

III.

Oh! let their hardships touch the bounteous breast,  
Relieve the aged sire and helpless boy;  
A little bread were wealth to the distressed;

Alas! 'tis all their pressing wants enjoy.

*Godfrey.* (giving him his hand.)

Poor child! then you are both in great distress!

*Ionas.*

Alas! we are so; but with my fiddle I hope we  
shall never be destitute. If we should be sick,  
God Almighty will take care of us; and if we die,  
we shall want nothing but a little spot of earth,  
which may be had any where.

*Godfrey.*

But my poor little boy, perhaps thou art hungry.  
Hold, here, take any cake.

*Ionas.*

Oh! no, my pretty master eat it yourself; a bit  
of bread serves me.

*Godfrey.*

No, you shall have this; I can eat bread as well  
as you.

*Ionas.*

Well, Sir, I thank you, but I will not eat it  
now. I will share it with my poor father; he is  
not used to taste such good things.

I 2

*Sophia.*



# 132 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Sophia.*

Your poor Father, - say you? here you shall give him my part.

*Charlotte.*

And take mine too.

*Amelia.*

And mine.

*Jonas.*

Oh! no, no, keep your cakes my sweet young ladies. One piece is enough for me. We are not used to fill our bellies with sweet things.

*Charles* (ironically).

He is right; that would spoil his fine voice.

*Sophia.*

Nobody has asked you for yours.

*Charles.*

Oh! I have dispatched that long ago.

*Godfrey.*

Come, my man; will you taste your cake first?

*Jonas.*

Oh! no Master. Since you are so good as to give it me, allow me to wrap it up in my handkerchief and take it home.

*Sophia.*

Stop a moment, I will give you a piece of linen cleaner than that, and meantime you may lay your cake in the window.

*Jonas.*

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 133

*Jonas.*

I will, my good young Lady, I come here to play upon the fiddle, not to eat.

*Amelia.*

I should wish to dance a minuet with Master Godfrey. Can you play any?

*Jonas.*

Whatever you please. A minuet, a jig, or a country dance.

*Amelia.*

Let us have the minuet first. (*Godfrey takes Amelia by the hand to dance.*)

*Charlotte.*

Why cannot we both dance, (*advancing towards Charles.*) Mr. Charles?

*Charles.*

Excuse me, Miss, I can't dance.

*Sophia.*

Yet he has learned full two years.

*Charles.*

I am not in a capering humour today.

*Charlotte* (*curtysing to him.*)

So then I am refused.

*Sophia.*

Come, cousin, lend me your hat. (*to Charlotte.*)

I shall have the honour, Ma'am to be your squire.

# 134 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Amelia.*

Then if we were to dance a double minuet?—

*Godfrey.*

Miss, I am at your service. (*They dance a double minuet, after which Charlotte goes to take out Godfrey.*)

*Charlotte.*

Mr. Godfrey, now I will dance with you.

*Godfrey.*

I shall be happy, Miss, to have that honour.

*Amelia.*

And now, Sophia, I will be your squire.

*Sophia.*

As this goes, I find I must lose my cousin; however, these Ladies have the first title to your complaisance. (*They dance another minuet, during which Charles goes to the window, takes Jonas's cake, and slips out of the room.*)

*Sophia.* (*to Godfrey, who wipes his face.*)

Ah! you give it up; you must own that we have stronger feet than you Gentlemen.

*Godfrey.*

It is because you are much nimbler.

*Amelia.* (*to Godfrey.*)

If your cousin had been as complaisant as you, we should soon have overmatched you; for then one of us could take breath while the other two danced. (*They all look round for Charles.*)

*Charlotte.*

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 135

*Charlotte.*

Ah! he is gone; so much the better.

*Jonas.*

Shall I play another tune or two?

*Godfrey.*

No; that is enough; unless, Ladies, you would choose more. The poor little fellow will be glad to go and earn something elsewhere. I have already told you how little I have in my purse; and Charles has gone off without paying.

*Charlotte.*

We will all contribute as well as you.

*Amelia.*

Certainly, we mean it. *(takes out her purse.)* There, Master Godfrey, is my purse.

*Charlotte.*

And here is mine.

*Sophia.*

Hold, cousin, here is a shilling; keep your money, and this will do for us both.

*Godfrey.*

No, no, Sophia, I have a right to pay first.

*(They gather the money, and give it to Jonas.)*

*Jonas.*

I will never take all that; this young Gentleman promised me only six-pence.

136 THE LITTLE FIDDELT

*Godfrey.*

Take the whole, my man; we are very happy to be able to do you a service.

*Jonas.*

God Almighty reward you. (to *Sophia*.) Now, Miss, if you would please to give me a piece of old linen to wrap up the cake that you have made me take.

*Sophia.*

I had quite forgot it. (runs to a drawer, and takes out a handkerchief.) There, it is a little worn, but it will do very well for your purpose.

*Jonas.*

May Heaven repay you for your generosity. (goes to the window for the cake.)

*Jonas* (sorrowfully.)

It is not here.

*Sophia.*

What a sad boy is that! he certainly has taken this poor child's cake.

*Jonas.*

Do not be concerned, my sweet young Lady. I am only sorry to lose it on account of my poor father.

*Godfrey.*

If Charles were not your brother, his greediness should cost him dear; but *Jonas's* father must not be a loser however. My dear *Sophia*, lend me that

fix-



## THE LITTLE FIDDLER 137

fix-pence which you were going to pay for me just now.

*Sophia.*

No, cousin, I will have the merit of it all to myself. (to *Jonas*.) There my lad, is six-pence; buy another cake for your father. (*Charlotte and Amelia feel in their purses.*)

*Charlotte.*

Hold, here are some more halfpence.

*Amelia.*

Take this too.

*Jonas.*

Oh dear, no; this is too much.

*Godfrey.* (taking him by the hand affectionately.)

How unhappy I am not to have any thing more to give thee! But I am an orphan, and subsist like thee upon the generosity of others.

*Jonas* (to *Godfrey*.)

I wish that you had not brought me here, or that you would take back your money.

*Godfrey.*

Do not be uneasy as to me. Farewell. Go and try to earn something elsewhere.

*Jonas* (to *Sophia*, as he is going.)

But, take your handkerchief, my good young Lady.

*Sophia.*

No, keep it if you have occasion for it.

## 138 THE LITTLE FIDDLER

*Jonas.*

May Heaven preserve you all in good health, and make you still more amiable than you are.

(goes out.)

### SCENE IX.

*Sophia, Charlotte, Amelia and Godfrey.*

*Sophia.*

Can you imagine any thing more shameful than the behaviour of Charles?

*Amelia.*

He should not play these pranks if I were his sister.

*Charlotte.*

I am sorry that he has destroyed all the pleasure we had, in doing a service to this poor little boy.

*Amelia.*

However he is not ill off at present; the cake has been pretty well made up to him.

*Godfrey.*

Very true, thanks to your generosity. But that does not justify the behaviour of Charles. Besides, poor Jonas might have had the one without losing the other.

*Sophia.*

It is you, cousin, that have suffered most upon the whole. You have deprived yourself of your share

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 139

share, that my good-for-nothing brother might eat it,  
(a knocking is heard at the door.)

*Amelia, Charlotte, Godfrey, Jonas.*

*Godfrey.*

Here is our little fiddler again. What is the matter, my man?

*Jonas (crying.)*

Oh dear! oh dear! Help! I am ruined. *(The children gather round him.)*

*Sophia.*

What has happened to you then?

*Jonas.*

The whole of my poor subsistence — all that I had to maintain myself and my father — see, see here — my little violin — it is broken all to pieces, and your handkerchief and your money — all is gone — he has taken it all from me.

*Godfrey.*

Who has broken your violin? who has taken your money?

*Jonas.*

'Twas he — 'Twas he that took my cake.

*Sophia.*

What, my brother? Is it possible?

*Godfrey.*

*Charles.*

*Charlotte.*

## 140 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Charlotte.*

It cannot be.

*Amelia.*

O the wretch!

*Jonas.*

Yes, it was he, it was he. As I was going out of the street-door, he came up to me, and asked if I had been paid for my playing, as otherwise he meant to pay me. Oh, yes, that I have, said I, and even overpaid. How came they by so much money? says he. Let me see what they have given you. So I, silly fool that I was — I should have remembered the cake; but I thought no more of that, I was so overjoyed to carry home so much money to my father. Besides I had not counted it, and was desirous to know the sum. So I laid my fiddle down on the ground; beside me, and took out the handkerchief. See here, said I to him, what I got more than was promised me at first; one of the young misses gave it me. I had tied up all my money in the handkerchief, and was going to undo the knot, when he snatched at it. I guessed his roguery. So he pulled one way and I another, when all at once seeing where my fiddle lay on the ground, he stamped on it with both his feet. I loosed my hold, and let go the handkerchief, and so he got it from me and ran away. Both my fiddle and the bow are broke, and now I have neither handkerchief

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 141

chief nor money. O my father! my poor father!  
What will become of us?

*Sophia.*

Why really I do not know. — I have nothing  
more in the world. O cousin!

*Charlotte.*

Here are some few halfpence. It is all that I  
have about me.

*Jonas.*

My sweet miss, I thank you; but that will not  
buy me a fiddle. O my poor father! he had it more  
than fifteen years.

*Amelia.*

Take this too. It is the very last farthing I have.

*Sophia* (runs to her drawer.)

Here is my thimble; it is gold. Run and sell it,  
my poor little man. I have an ivory one that will  
serve me.

*Godfrey.*

No; keep your thimble, cousin. Stop my boy, I  
can extricate you. (Takes out his buckles, and gives  
them to him.) I have another pair of pinchbeck. You  
will certainly get twelve shillings for these. I can  
give them away, for they are my own. My god  
father made me a present of them for my birth-day.  
— (Sophia offers him her thimble, and Godfrey his  
buckles. Jonas hesitates.)

*Jonas:*



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*Jonas.* O —  
No; I will have none of them. My father would think that I had stolen them.

*Sophia.* —  
Take my thimble at least.

*Godfrey.* —  
Wont you take my buckles? you will make me angry. Take them, I say.

*Jonas.* —  
Oh dear! would you have me deprive you of your ornaments?

*Godfrey.* —  
Do not be uneasy about that. God will repay me, perhaps, more than I give you. Your father wants bread. I have no father to maintain.

*Sophia.* —  
Go, go, and take care of yourself.

*Jonas.* —

At least take back your thimble.  
*Sophia.* —

No; it is not mine now.

*Charlotte.* —  
If you ever pass our way, I will do something for you.

*Amelia.* —  
Tis in — Square; any body will shew you Mr. Richmond's.

*Jonas.* —

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 143

*Jonas.*

Oh! great folks seldom ask me into their houses. I am sometimes, perhaps, taken down into the kitchen.

*Sophia.*

Well, enough of this. Your father probably is uneasy on your account, and ours may return very soon.

*Jonas.*

Hew, miss! your papa? Do you expect him soon?

*Sophia.*

Yes, go your ways, else the rogue who took your handkerchief and money, may take this from you too.

*Jonas.*

But I hope you are very sure not to be scolded.

*Godfrey.*

No, no, never fear. Good by!

*Jonas (As he goes out.)*

The good-natured little souls!

### SCENE X.

*Sophia, Charlotte, Amelia, Godfrey.*

*Charlotte.*

I am very sorry that you have deprived yourself of your buckles, Master Godfrey.

*Amelia.*

## 144 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Amelia.*

You have set us a good example.

*Godfrey.*

I only followed that of Sophia. I should be happy in the opportunity of doing a good action, if it had not been furnished by the mean behaviour of Charles. With what pleasure I shall now look at my pinchbeck buckles!

### SCENE XI.

*Mr. Melfort, Sophia, Amelia, Charlotte, Godfrey, Ionas.*

*(The children get close together. Sophia and Godfrey cast a side look at Ionas, and whisper each other.)*

*Mr. Melfort* *(to the Miss Richmonds.)*

Your servant, ladies! I thank you for the honour that you have done my daughter. But give me leave to hear, in your presence, what this boy has to say. He was waiting for me upon the stairs, and cannot leave me, he says, until he has spoken to me before you — *(to Ionas.)* Come, what have you to say.

*Ionas* *(to Sophia and Godfrey.)*

My good young master and miss, I beg you, for Heaven's sake, not to be angry with me; but I cannot help speaking, and it would be ill done of me to keep what you have made me take, without the consent

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER 145

consent of your papa. I know very well that children have nothing of their own to give away, and how you late son behaved.

*Mr. Melfort.*

What is all this?

*Jonas.*

I am going to tell you, sir. This young master called me from his window to come in and play upon my violin for these ladies. There was another little gentleman too along with them, very handsome, but a very ill-natured rogue.

*Mr. Melfort.*

What! my son?

*Jonas.*

I beg pardon. That word escaped me. Well; I played my best, what tunes I knew, and this good little company were so kind as to bestow me a piece of cake, with a handkerchief to wrap it up, and almost a handful of money besides. I do not know how much.

*Mr. Melfort.*

Well?

*Jonas.*

Well, that ill-natured little gentleman took away the cake, which I was intending to carry to my poor father, who is blind. That I should not have minded; but he slips out of the room, and when I was going away, quite overjoyed with my little bundle, he watches me in the passage, takes the

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hand-

## 140 THE LITTLE FIDDLER

handkerchief with all the money from me by force, and breaks my violin in pieces. Look ye, there it is, (crying.) All my riches, that supported me and my father.

I only followed *Mr. Melfort.*

Is it possible? Such a malicious ill-natured action! — What! my son? —

*Charlotte.*

His behaviour in every thing else makes this very probable. Ask Sophia herself.

*Mr. Melfort.*

Go, my man; do not let it afflict you: I will indemnify you for this. But is that all?

I'll be bound to *Ionas.*

No, sir, only bear me. Being in such trouble, I rejoined to tell these good little gentle folks the whole affair. They had not money enough to pay for the damage: so this pretty miss gives me her gold thimble, and this young gentleman his silver buckles. I could not possibly keep them: my father would have thought that I had stolen them. I knew you were coming home, so I waited to return them to you, and here they are. — But I have no fiddle now. O my fiddle! O my poor father!

*Mr. Melfort.*

What an account thou hast given me! Is it thou, or you, my generous children, whom I should most

admire?



## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 147

admire? Excellent boy! In extreme indigence, to lose all; and yet, from the fear of doing wrong, to run the risk of letting a father, whom you love, perish with hunger.

*Jonas.*

Is it so great a matter, not to be a rogue? No, no; one never thrives on ill-gotten bread. It is what my father and mother have often told me. If you would only please to buy me another fiddle, that will make amends for all. Whatever more the thimble and buckles would have brought, God Almighty will repay me.

*Mr. Melfort.*

Your father and you must be endowed with extraordinary uprightness of heart, not even to suspect the depravity of others? God will make use of me as an instrument to impart his blessings to you. You shall stay here, and for the first you shall wait upon Godfrey. Afterwards we will see what we can do better for you.

*Jonas.*

What! wait upon this little angel of a gentleman, Oh! I should be delighted (*tours to Godfrey.*) But, no (*sorrowfully*) I cannot leave my father all alone. Without me, how would he do to live? What! should I be in abundance, and he die for want? Oh! no.

K 2

*Mr.*

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*Mr. Melfort.*

Excellent child! and who is thy father?

*Jonas.*

An old blind labourer, whom I supported by playing on the fiddle. It is true, he seldom eats, nor I neither, any thing else but a piece of bread with some milk. But God always gives us enough for the day, and we take no care for the morrow: he provides for that also.

*Mr. Melfort.*

Well, I will take care of thy father, and, if he chuses, I will get him into an alms-house, where old and infirm people are well maintained you may go and see him there whenever you please. — *(Jonas after an exclamation of joy, runs about the room, quite transported.)*

*Jonas.*

O goodness! What, my dear father? No; that will make him die with joy. I cannot stop any longer, but must go for him, and bring him here.

*(Runs out. Sophia and Gosfray take Mr. Melfort's hands. They wipe their eyes.)*

*(Without me, how would he go to live? What! how would he be in bondage, and be the for want!)*

SCENE

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SCENE XII.

*Mr. Melfort, Sophia, Amelia, Charlotte,  
and Godfrey.*

*Mr. Melfort.*

O my dear children! how happy would this day have been for me, if, while I admire the generosity of your sentiments, the idea of my son's unworthiness did not intervene to poison my happiness! But, no; it should not affect it. God has given me another son in thee, my dear Godfrey. If you are not so by birth, yet you are by the ties of blood, and by congenial worthiness of heart. Yes, you shall be my son. — But where is Charles? Go, seek him, and bring him hither to me immediately.  
— (*Godfrey goes out.*)

*Sophia.*

It is almost an hour since we saw him. While the little boy was playing a minuet to us, he disappeared with his piece of cake.

*Godfrey (returning.)*

He was seen going into a confectioner's not far off, I have told John to go for him.

*Mr. Melfort.*

Children, step into my study. I wish to know what answer he will have the assurance to make me. When I want your testimony, I shall call you.

## 150 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Charlotte and Amelia.*

Then we shall take our leave.

*Mr. Melfort.*

No, my dears! I will send word to your papa and mamma, that you will spend the rest of the evening with us. Probably the generous little Jonas and his old father will be our guests also. I have occasion for something to assuage the cruel wound that Charles has given my heart, and I know of nothing more salutary than the conversation of such amiable children as you.

*Sophia (listening:)*

I think I hear Charles coming. — (*Mr. Melfort opens his study-door. The children withdraw.*)

### SCENE XIII.

*Mr. Melfort.*

I have long dreaded a discovery of this disagreeable nature, but could never have suspected him of any thing so horrid. It is, perhaps, still not too late to correct his vices. Alas! why am I obliged to try a desperate remedy?

### SCENE XIV.

*Mr. Melfort, Charles.*

*Charles.*

What are your commands, papa?

*Mr.*

## THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 131

*Mr. Melfort.*

Where have you been? Were you not in your chamber?

*Charles.*

Our tutor is gone out. Godfrey was below stairs. So, after having studied all the afternoon, I grew tired of being alone.

*Mr. Melfort.*

Why did not you go, as well as Godfrey, and join the little company that I found with your sister?

*Charles.*

And so I did; but those misses treated me so ill —

*Mr. Melfort.*

How? you astonish me.

*Charles.*

At first they drank tea, but without asking me, to have a drop. On the contrary, they shewed me all the spite in the world. Then Godfrey picked up a little beggar brat in the street, and brought him to play the fiddle to them. He gave him some of the cake that was brought up to them, and me not a bit. They danced, but not one of the ladies would dance with me, though there were three of them, and no gentleman but Godfrey. What could I do here? I went down to the door to look at the people passing by.



## THE LITTLE FIDDLER

*Mr. Melfort.*

Only to the door? What was it then that passed at the corner of the street, between a little fiddler and you? I have been told that you beat him, and broke his violin, and that he went away crying.

*Charles.*

Yes, that is true, papa; and if I had not been very good natured, I should have got a constable to put him in bridewell. You shall hear, sir. When I saw him go out, I said to myself, I must give this poor creature something too for his trouble, for I know that Godfrey has nothing of his own, and a beggar is but ill paid with only a morsel of cake. So I took some money out of my purse which I gave him, and he drew out a handkerchief to put it in. I perceived that it was one of my sister's handkerchiefs; you may see the mark. I begged him very civilly to return it, which he would not. So I took him by the collar, and we struggled together, and by accident I put my foot upon his fiddle.

*Mr. Melfort (with indignation.)*

Hold your tongue, base liar! I cannot bear to hear you.

*Charles (Drawing near to him, and going to take him by the hand.)*

Why, my dear papa, what makes you angry?

*Mr. Melfort.*

Be gone, wicked creature, out of my sight! you shock me. *(He calls the children from the study.)*

SCENE

# THE LITTLE FIDDLER. 153

## SCENE XV.

*Mr. Melfort, Sophia, Amelia, Charlotte,  
Charles, Godfrey.*

*Mr. Melfort.*

Come hither, my children: I will see none but those who merit my affection. As for you, quit my presence for ever. But no, stop. You shall receive your sentence first. *(To Sophia and Godfrey.)* You have heard his charges against you.

*Sophia.*

Yes, papa; and if it were not necessary for our own justification, I would say not a word against him, for fear of increasing your anger.

*Charles.*

Do not believe any thing that she will tell you.

*Mr. Melfort.*

Be silent. I have already had a proof of thy detestable falshood. Lying is the high road to theft and murder. Thou hast already committed the first crime, and perhaps wantest only strength to attempt the other. Go on Sophia.

*Sophia.*

In the first place, he has done no business at all this afternoon. It was Godfrey that wrote his translation for him.

*Mr. Melfort.*

Is this true?

*Godfrey.*

I cannot deny it.

*Sophia.*

## 154 THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

*Sophia.*

Then he spilt a dish of tea upon Amelia's slip; and while we were busy in wiping it, he remained at table, and emptied the tea-pot. There was not a drop left for us. These young ladies are witnesses (*pointing to the Miss Richmonds.*) As to the cake —

*Mr. Melfort.*

That is enough. All your baseness is discovered. Go up into your chamber for this day; to morrow morning I will put you out of the house. I will give you time enough to amend before you return, and if that experiment does not succeed, there are not wanting methods to dispose of incorrigible reprobates, who disturb society by their misdeeds. Godfrey, tell John to see that he keeps his room. You will give orders in the mean time, that your tutor be sent to me as soon as he returns.

*Sophia and Godfrey (interceding for him.)*

Dear papa! — Dear uncle! —

*Mr. Melfort.*

I will hear not a word in his favour. He who is capable of taking from the poor by force the earnings of his industry, of breaking the instrument of his livelihood, and of seeking to justify such actions by falsehood and calumny, should be turned out of the society of men. I thank God that he has left me still two such excellent children as you. You shall be my consolation henceforward, and with you, I will endeavour to make myself as happy this evening as the father of so unprincipled a son can be.

THE END.

THE

Person  
**THE SIEGE  
OF GLOUCESTER,**  
**A DRAMA,**  
**IN ONE ACT.**

*Persons.*

*Lord Fairfax, General of the parliamentary Army.*

*Lord Capel, Governor of Gloucester.*

*Edmund, Son of Lord Fairfax.*

*Arthur, Son of Lord Capel.*

*Colonel Morgan, Friend of Fairfax.*

*Colonel Kingston, Friend of Capel.*

*Surry, Aid de Camp to Fairfax.*

*Soldiers.*

*The SCENE represents the head-quarters of Fairfax before the Walls of Gloucester.*

THE END



THE  
SIEGE OF GLOUCESTER,

A DRAMA.

SCENE I.

*Fairfax, Morgan.*

*Fairfax* (reading a paper.)

Yesterday's assault has cost me many men.

*Morgan,*

Yes my Lord, and indeed the best of your people.

*Fairfax.*

I should less regret their loss if it brought any advantage to the common cause, but Gloucester is as invincible as ever, and the obstinate Capel. — If I were not the warrior for freedom, I would wish to be the defender of Gloucester.

*Morgan.*

He alone is a stronger protection to the city than all its fortifications, and so long as he defends its Walls we shall assault it in vain.

*Fairfax.*

## THE SIEGE

*Fairfax.*

He shall not much longer bid me defiance. If his enemies cannot overcome him, he shall be vanquished by his son.

*Morgan.*

His son?

*Fairfax.*

Yes my friend. The young Arthur must open me the gates of Gloucester. For this purpose I have directed, he should accompany my son from London, and I am this instant informed they are arrived.

*Morgan.*

Here comes Surry.

## SCENE II.

*Fairfax, Morgan, Surry.**Fairfax.*

Well Surry, is the truce agreed on? hath Capel accepted the proposed conference?

*Surry.*

Yes my Lord; hostilities are to cease for six hours, and this morning Lord Capel will visit you in your camp.

*Fairfax.*

To celebrate his triumph before my eyes! How appear'd he?

*Surry.*

*Surry.*

Composed and unassuming. In his face you might read the name of subject.

*Fairfax.*

This proud slave remains unmoved whilst the guardian Angel of Albion trembles. Surry, call my son. *(Exit Surry.)*

### SCENE III.

*Fairfax, Morgan.*

*Morgan.*

I confess my Lord, that I see not your intentions.

*Fairfax.*

Last night I got intelligence, that General Monk drew together some troops to relieve the fortress. This is the reason, why I ventured a third assault. It was unsuccessful; but what force refuses, stratagem shall obtain.

*Morgan.*

To prevent their being relieved is absolutely necessary, but how can the young Arthur aid you?

*Fairfax.*

I will point the dangerous situation of his father to him, propose a conference; Arthur will tremble for his father's life, and to insure his safety will persuade him to give up the fortress.

*Morgan.*

*Morgan.*

Believe you that my Lord?

*Fairfax.*

I hope it only. What an armed world could not obtain, tears have accomplished.

*Morgan.*

Capel is a tender father; but an obstinate subject.

*Fairfax.*

If the arms of nature cannot vanquish him, then — My son comes; go in the mean time to the young Arthur, endeavour by artfull flattery to prepare him for my purpose. *(Exit Morgan.)*

#### SCENE IV.

*Fairfax, Edmund, Surry.*

*Fairfax* *(embraces Edmund)*

Embrace me my son.

*Edmund.*

You are welcome my father!

*Fairfax.*

I have not without reason sent for you hither; an honorable employment awaits you here.

*Edmund.*

I know nothing more honorable than to obey my Father. What are your commands?

*Fairfax.*

*Fairfax.*

You shall save the young Arthur from the greatest misfortune that can befall him.

*Edmund.*

Oh Heaven! Speak my father, let me not lose a moment.

*Fairfax.*

Lord Capel by his obstinacy plunges himself in ruin. I pity him, still more his family. In a short time I am to have a conference with him. — If possible to save him — I wish his son to join his prayers with my advices.

*Edmund.*

Ah my father I fear — —

*Fairfax.*

He will effect nothing by so doing? Oh! my son! Nature hath given to children a greater power over their parents than ever the laws entrusted to parents over their children.

*Edmund.*

Arthur is such a dutiful son, that he will not esteem any deed of his father's unright.

*Fairfax.*

Are you not Arthur's Friend?

*Edmund.*

Yes and never more so, than now, altho' our fathers are unhappily at war.

I

*Fairfax.*



*Fairfax.*

Remain so still my son, and if the happiness; if the life of your friend is dear to you, support me in my purposes. Go bring him to me, I will speak with him myself.

*Edmund.*

I obey, (*aside*) Ah! what shall I be able to say to him. (*Exit Edmund.*)

## SCENE V.

*Fairfax, Surry.*

*Fairfax.*

In the mean time that these children are with me, go you, Surry, and inform Colonel Morgan, that he order the army, to hold themselves in readiness, on the first signal to march out.

*Surry.*

It shall be done, my Lord, but — — —

*Fairfax.*

I understand you, Fairfax may use a stratagem against his enemy, but he cannot break his word. The truce, which you have made, shall be held sacred, but even in the moment, that I admonish him to surrender, a courageous army shall be presented to his eyes, which may shake his obduracy.

(*Exit Surry.*)

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SCENE VI.

*Fairfax, Edmund, Arthur* (who submissively  
wails out ob. I as salutes *Fairfax*.)

*Fairfax* (takes him by the hand.)

I have an important commission for you my dear  
Arthur, which is worthy of your filial ear.

*Arthur.*

Then you must send me to the fortress, my  
Lord, that by the side of my father, I may help  
to defend it against your bravery.

*Fairfax* (affectionately.)

I wonder at your courage my child, but it would  
only plunge you into misfortunes.

*Arthur.*

It would perhaps obtain me the honour, of  
dying with my father for our King.

*Fairfax.*

Do you love your father?

*Arthur* (looking on *Edmund*.)

Put this question to my Edmund, and if his feel-  
ings wou'd permit him to speak, his answer would  
be mine.

*Fairfax.*

Well then, return your father the present he has  
given you.

*Arthur.*

What present?

L 2

*Fairfax.*

*Fairfax.*

Life.

*Arthur.*

Life! Speak my Lord, what can I do for him.

*Fairfax.*

In a few days the fortress must surrender and then instead of laurels, the ax of the executioner falls on the head of its defender.

*Arthur.*

Ah my Lord! I guess your design. You will prevail on the enemies of my father, to accept the head of his son instead of his. To die at the same time for my King and for my Father, what a glorious fate! (*Throws himself at the Feet of Fairfax.*) Oh my Lord in what manner can I sufficiently thank you?

*Edmund* (*turns himself away and wipes his eyes.*)  
It is too much to support.

*Fairfax* (*raises Arthur and embraces him.*)

My child you force me to admire you as highly as the defender of Gloucester; but do you think me so cruel, to demand such a sacrifice.

*Arthur.*

What then do you desire of me.

*Fairfax.*

In an hour you will see your father here. Unite with me in persuading him to surrender a place, which even his courage no longer can defend.

*Arthur.*

*Arthur.*

I, my Lord?

*Fairfax.*

Picture to him the loss of his fortune; the threatening scaffold, the lamentations of his Widow, the despair of his son; represent to him the abyss of misery into which his obstinacy will plunge himself, and his family.

*Arthur.*

You have just assured me of your esteem, my Lord; was this assurance from your Heart?

*Fairfax.*

Yes, my child.

*Arthur.*

Well then, my Lord; permit me still to deserve it, and to suppose this proposal only a trial of my virtue.

*Fairfax.*

Your virtue needs no trials. The preservation of your father is dear to me. — He would not be able to withstand your tender representations.

*Arthur.*

My father is too wise to follow the advice of a child.

*Fairfax.*

If he is wise, he will not dispise it.

*Arthur.*

*Arthur.*

Tell me my Lord; if you were in my Father's place, would you give up Gloucester to the entreaties of your son?

*Fairfax* (a little confused.)

Ask my Edmund; what power his prayers have over me. Your Father too is acquainted with nature; he will not be deaf to her voice.

*Arthur.*

He hears only the voice of duty; this will tell him what he ought to do.

*Fairfax* (in a threatening tone.)

Remember, the life of your father is in your hands.

*Arthur.*

It is neither in your hands, nor in mine, my Lord, yet suppose it was in my power to save him then must you ask me to ransom him by my blood, and not by treason.

*Fairfax.*

By this obstinacy I know his son. I will leave you before my patience is exhausted. In half an hour I will for the last time ask you, if you would rather see your father lead to the scaffold or exalted to honour? Remain with him, Edmund, and try if your friendship hath more power over his heart, than my advice.

(Exit Fairfax.)

SCENE



## SCENE VII.

*Edmund, Arthur* (who look at each other in despair.)

*Arthur.*

If you were in my place, dearest Edmund, what would you do?

*Edmund.*

Imitate you.

*Arthur.*

What an honour for me to receive the approbation of my friend against his father.

*Edmund.*

Against my father? Ah! Let me believe that he feels the worth of your virtue as much as myself. Let me for ever esteem the author of my days.

*Arthur.*

How greatly do I wish to take part with you in your esteem. Formerly he loved me, and was the friend of the hero, whom he now persecutes. Ah my father! (weeps.)

*Edmund* (embraces him.)

You pierce me to the heart.

*Arthur.*

I see him, the bravest amongst the Britons led by an executioner to the most shameful death, I hear his enemies shouting round his corpse. Oh God! Why is the father of my Edmund at their head?

L 4

*Edmund.*

*Edmund.*

If my father so much forget himself as to become the executioner of yours; then, — forgive me Heaven! — But I should forget that I am his son,

*Arthur.*

He is lost! you have heard the sentence the Parliament hath pronounced against him.

*Edmund* (after a thoughtful silence.)

I must spare my country a crime. (He walks and looks about the Stage.) Come my friend, let us fly to France. I will serve you, or rather your father as an hostage against mine. He is absent, no one observes us; I have seen horses without, this moment is precious, let us hasten.

*Arthur* (in going.)

Oh my friend how can I. — — —

## SCENE VIII.

*Arthur, Edmund, Fairfax, Surry, Guards.*

*Fairfax* (entering enraged.)

Guard there! Seize them both.

*Edmund.*

Oh Heaven.

*Fairfax* (to Edmund.)

Son! what wouldst thou do?

*Edmund.*

My duty.

*Arthur*

*Arthur* (to the Guard.)  
Release him, I alone am guilty; I have obliged him to fly.

*Edmund.*

Do not believe it, my Lord, his magnanimity would deceive you, I only have deserved your anger.

*Fairfax.*

Silence ingrate, I know whom I have to punish. Let them be thrown into separate prisons.

*Edmund.*

Ah my father! If I dare yet give you that name, I conjure you by it, to let me share the prison of my friend.

*Arthur.*

No my Lord, if your honour is dear to you, spare your son, I will with joy submit to my fate, if I hear that you have forgiven him; his fault is too noble, not to deserve pardon.

*Fairfax.*

Surry execute my commands (*Edmund and Arthur embrace each other in silent despair, Surry and the Guard lead them off.*)

## SCENE IX.

*Fairfax* (*alone looking after them.*)

Is this the son, that ever delighted me by his obedience? The traitor! but for him my purpose might have succeeded; yet he shall pay dear for his crime

in punishing the temerity of his friend, I will torture his soul. (*he walks to and fro*) Yes, yes, and even this punishment may forward my design! Tremble boasting Capel, for thou shalt see a scene, that shall bend thy stubborn soul.

## SCENE X.

*Fairfax, Surry, Kingston.*

*Kingston.*

My Lord, the Governor of Gloucester acquaints you of his approach.

*Fairfax.*

This officer will receive him, in the mean while I must give some pressing commands before the conference (*to Surry*) as soon as he arrives! Surry give me information, I shall be with Colonel Morgau!

(*Fairfax and Kingston exit different ways.*)

## SCENE XI.

*Surry (alone.)*

What can be his intentions, a silent fury kindles in his eyes. Even the tears of his son had not the power to disarm him. He surely cannot think of sacrificing the young Arthur? I tremble, yet no; Fairfax is noble; and to mean a revenge would forever cast a blot upon his fame.

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# OF GLOUCESTER.

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## SCENE XII.

*Surry, Kingston, Capel.*

*Kingston (to Capel.)*

This, my Lord, is his apartment.

*Surry (offers submissively to kiss the hand of Capel.)*

Permit me my Lord, to kiss the hand of the hero of Gloucester.

*Capel (seems to draw it back.)*

It dares not receive such honorable respect, whilst fetters are preparing for the hands of my king. —

Where is my Lord Fairfax?

*Surry (confused.)*

I hasten to inform him of the arrival, of his noble enemy. *(Exit Surry.)*

## SCENE XIII.

*Capel, Kingston.*

*Kingston.*

I confess to you, my Lord, all I see here, makes me suspicious.

*Capel.*

Why so, my friend?

*Kingston.*

Fairfax was before inform'd of your arrival, yet notwithstanding he is gone out, and his whole Camp is under arms.

*Capel.*



# THE SIEGE OF

*Capel.*

And what would you infer from that?

*Kingston.*

Might not a secret treachery? ----

*Capel.*

Fear nothing, Kingston. The laws of war are held sacred by all nations. Even the tyrant observes them. He knows that others can retaliate.

*Kingston.*

He who can take arms against his king, can also break his faith with a subject.

*Capel.*

I know Fairfax. He is cunning and enterprising, but he has a proud soul, which scorns meanness. The dream of independence hath drawn him to the parliament, but he will never from the path of honour swerve.

*Kingston.*

I wish it my Lord, here he is.

## SCENE XIV.

*Kingston, Fairfax, Surry, Capel.*

*Capel. (salutes Fairfax.)*

I cannot, my Lord, better prove to you my confidence in your honour, than by coming into your camp accompanied only by a friend.

*Fairfax.*

*Fairfax.*

If your attendant is your friend, my Lord, he can be present at our conference.

*Capel.*

Was he even my enemy, he might be present.

*Fairfax.*

I have to offer you in the name of the parliament important advantages, which are the surest pledge of the esteem, with which the heroism hath inspired them.

*Capel.*

If my services merit a reward, I must receive it from the hand of my king, who is also the parliament's king.

*Fairfax.*

Hear me, my Lord! A revolution is inevitable, and neither you, nor I can prevent the storm. Policy therefore bids you join the side of the fortunate party.

*Capel.*

And honour bids me remain true to my unfortunate prince.

*Fairfax.*

You have already done every thing, my Lord, that could possibly be expected from a valiant man. Your walls are in ruins, and your people without provisions.

*Capel.*

*Capel.*

But they have yet ammunition, and courage to use it.

*Fairfax.*

Under your command their courage cannot fail; but prudence now requires, that it should be repressed. Gloucester must be given up, if not to-day, it must to-morrow, but to-morrow the parliament will condemn you as an enemy to freedom, and to-day it offers you the title of duke and the office of a governor.

*Capel (turns himself.)*

What have I heard?

*Fairfax.*

Why do you turn your face from me?

*Capel.*

That you may not see me blush, for you, and for my country.

*Fairfax.*

Compose yourself, my Lord, and weigh my proposal with coolness.

*Capel.*

Was this proposal the object of our meeting?

*Fairfax.*

It was, and great is its importance, for on it depends your welfare.

*Capel*

*Capel* (retiring.)

Farewell, my Lord.

*Fairfax* (approaching.)

I must be calm. (he follows him and takes him by the hand) Yet a moment, Lord Capel.

*Capel* (agitated.)

Oh Britons, oh my country how low are you fallen!

*Fairfax.*

You love your country and yet serve its oppressor, your arm is too weak to check triumphant liberty. The throne trembles to its basis, and in a few days must fall.

*Capel.*

Then shall its ruins bury me.

*Fairfax.*

The parliament will condemn you to an ignominious death.

*Capel.*

And it would now condemn me to a shameful life.

*Fairfax.*

True Britons will never mention your name but with abhorrence; your injured widow will curse your obduracy; your banished son will for ever reproach you for a life, which he must end in poverty and shame.

*Capel.*

*Capel.*

Charles will consecrate a tear to my memory, he will provide for my widow and be a father to my orphan son.

*Fairfax* (*sternful*)

You expect great things from a detested tyrant, who no longer has dominions.

*Capel* (*with heat.*)

Speak with greater reverence of your king. Charles be thou ever blessed! even in the midst of the army of his rebellious subjects, I would not permit his sacred person to be abused.

*Fairfax* (*enraged.*)

Well then, obstinate slave if neither the loss of your life, nor of your honour can move you, trebble for the life of your child (*he calls*) Colonel Morgan.

## SCENE XV.

*Kingston, Fairfax, Surry, Capel.*

*A curtain is drawn which discovers Arthur bound, on each side a soldier holding with one hand a pistol to his temples and with the other a dagger to his breast; behind him stands Morgan.*

*Capel* (*with a bitter exclamation.*)

Oh heaven my son (*he leans himself on Kingston.*)

*Fairfax.*



*Fairfax.*

You are not deceived, it is he; will you save his life?

*Capel.*

Yes traitor through your death, (in despair draws his sword to attack *Fairfax*.)

*Morgan.*

Do not stir, my Lord, else you and your son are lost.

*Arthur.*

Recover yourself, my father; I fear not death. I am your son.

*Capel* (sheaths his half drawn sword, lets his arms sink and says after a short pause to *Fairfax*.)

Barbarian! what hath this guiltless sacrifice done to you?

*Fairfax.*

A few moments ago, he braved me even with as much insolence as his father.

*Capel.*

Hath he braved you; well then! so will he also brave your executioners. Oh my son! why dare I not embrace you?

*Kingston.*

I hope, my Lord, you will not stain your honor by the death of an innocent man.

M

*Fairfax.*

*Fairfax.*

His fate is in the hand of his father; if he will surrender Gloucester, Arthur shall live, if not, he must die.

*Capel (in a pathetic tone to Arthur.)*

My child, God and your king —

*Surry (aside.)*

I must save the honour of my general, even if it should cost me my life.

*(Exit Surry all look alternately on Capel and Arthur.)*

*Kingston (weeps.)*

Ah!

*Capel (to Kingston.)*

You weep my friend? rather wish me joy in having such a son, and teach our brethren to follow his example. My affront may remain unrevenge'd if only Gloucester is saved.

*Fairfax.*

You have now only a moment's time, Lord Capel.

*Capel.*

My son, God and your King —

*Morgan (to Arthur.)*

Have you nothing to say to your father?

*Arthur.*

Nothing.

*Morgan (to the soldiers.)*

Prepare yourselves.

M

*Capel.*

*Capel.*

Farewell my child. Let the king live. *(turns himself away.)*

*Fairfax* *(in a fury.)*

Oh rage! *(aside.)* Well then *(loud.)*

## SCENE XVI.

*The above. Edmund, Surry.*

*Edmund* rushes by with great speed and throws himself on the young *Capel.*

Ah! my Arthur, my friend, you shall not die alone.

*Fairfax.*

What do I see? my son!

*Edmund.*

I am no longer your son, cruel father; execute now your purposes, before the wrath of heaven prevents you.

*Fairfax* *(enraged to Edmund.)*

Insolence! who hath unlocked thy prison.

*Surry.*

I my Lord, and I glory in the deed.

*Edmund* *(to his father.)*

You alone are insensible to generosity, but you will soon feel the sting of conscience *(to the soldiers)* why do you delay?

*M 2*

*Arthur.*

*Arthur* (endeavours to get loose from Edmund.)

Leave me, dearest Edmund. — Your friendship goes too far.

Edmund (much affected)

No, I will not leave you; I will not outlive the death of my friend, and the honour of my father.

23. IV. 1922

I triumph. The virtue of the son compensates for the crime of the father.

**Fairfax** (aside, after he has some moments attentively observed the attachment of Edmund and Arthur.)

O shame! (aloud to Corset) yes I am vanquished.  
(To Edmund) unloose the bonds of your friend, Ed-  
mund, and give him again to his father; my hands  
deserve not to touch this young hero.

**Edmund**  
Heaven.

**Cape:**

What dost thou hear, O Arthur! who hast unlocked  
(Edmund unbinds Arthur, and leads him to his father,  
who locks them both in his arms.)

*Arthur.*

My father.

Capel

My children! — I cannot speak

Unit A

• M

*Fairfax.*

*Fairfax* (looks on them and casts down his eyes.)  
No; I am not able to support the fight.

*Edmund* (seeing his father weep tears himself out of the arms of Capel and throws himself at his feet,)  
I have again found my father. Oh! hide not your tears: (To Capel and the rest.) My Lord Capel my friend! all that have seen my father act unjustly behold him now in tears.

*Fairfax* (raises him.)

Be blessed, my dearest Edmund, I will never forget that you have spared me a crime (to Capel). You are free, my Lord, to return back to your fortress; my admiration will follow you, may I entreat you to let me share in your esteem?

*Capel* (offers him his hand.)

I give you here a pledge, my Lord, it is the very hand, with which I swore fidelity to my king.

*Arthur* (kisses the hand of his father.)

My father, you have held me worthy to offer my life for our king, permit me now to enjoy this honour by your side.

*Capel.*

No, my son, my duty is not yours. You have a mother that needs your assistance, you have also



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here a friend that would have shared death with  
you, share now your life with him.

*Fairfax.*

Embrace me, my children, forget the cruelties of  
this day. I cannot love you more than I esteem you;  
may heaven reward your virtue, and grant you to  
see happier days than your fathers.

THE END.

BLIND.

BLIND-MAN'S BUFF,

A COMEDY,

IN TWO ACTS.

*Persons.*

*Mr. Milner.*

*Caesar,* *his son.*

*Viola,* *his daughters.*

*Clare,*

*Rosamund,*

*Beatrice,* *their friends.*

*Laura, a little lame,*

*The two Bartholomews, friends to Caesar.*

*Martin,* *their acquaintance.*

*Roger,* *Mr. Milner's groom.*

SCENE, is an apartement in the house  
of Mr. Milner, with a table, and upon  
it books and other papers, and a speak-  
ing trumpet in the corner.

BLIND-MAN'S BUFF,  
A COMEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

*Caesar* (*speaking to his father while he goes down stairs.*)

No, no, paps, don't be afraid: I'll take the greatest care no accident shall happen to your papers, I'll put up your books too in the closet. — (*he comes forward, jumping as it were with joy.*) We shall have some fine diversion! When the cat's away, the mice ('tis said) will play. (*To Viola, who now comes in*) Well now, Viola, is mamma gone out, and all our little friends arriv'd?

*Viola.*

My friends are all three come; but none of your companions yet,

*Caesar.*

O, I can easily believe you, sister. We don't want to run a gadding like you girls: and so we're not the first to keep appointments of this nature. You must force us from our study, if you'd have us. Look you, I'd lay any wager the Bartholomews, at least, are hard at work, while we are speaking.

*Viola.*

Yes, to settle what fine tricks they can contrive to put upon us. — But pray, Caesar, is it true papa will let us pass the evening here? Our room above is so very small, we could not have found room to turn ourselves well round.

*Caesar.*

Could my papa refuse you any thing, when I concern'd myself to ask it? — Softly little girl, don't discompose the papers. — Let them lie.

*Viola.*

Keep that advice, sir, to yourself: I meant to lay them smooth.

*Caesar* (with an air of importance.)

No, no, you can't miss; for 'tis I am charg'd with that commission.

*Viola.*

Truly, my papa could not have given it to so orderly a gentleman! Let me, at least, assist you then;



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then; and afterward I'll put the chairs in order.  
These great books I'll first remove.

*Caesar.*

Don't think of touching them! At most, I can  
permit you only to take one by one, and pile them  
up upon my hands. (*She does so, till they reach his  
chin.*)

*Viola.*

There's full enough.

*Caesar* (*leaning backward.*)

One more only. — So. — I've now sufficient for  
one turn. (*He takes a step or two, when all the books  
fall down.*)

*Viola* (*bursting out a laughing.*)

Ha, ha, ha, ha! there, there they go! Those  
handsome books papa would never let us lay a  
finger on! I fancy he'll be greatly pleas'd to see  
them jumbled thus together!

*Caesar.*

I had lost the centrum gravitatis, as my tutor  
says. He's very wise at least. (*He picks the books up,  
but they tumble down as fast.*) Dence take it! They  
have been at Sadler's Wells, I think, and learn'd to  
tumble sure!

*Viola.*

You'll never finish, if I don't assist you. So d'ye  
see, I'll spread my apron, and do you stoop down  
and pile them in it.

*Caesar.*

*Caesar.*

That's well thought indeed! (*Caesar goes upon his knees, takes up the books, and places them in order on his sister's apron.*)

*Viola.*

Softly, brother! th' y'll rub one against another! So I've got them all, and now I'll carry them into the closet. (*She goes out.*)

*Caesar* (*rising out of breath.*)

Bless me! I should never do to live a long time in the country where men go upon all-fours like monkeys. (*He fans himself with his hat.*)

*Viola* (*re-entering.*)

Could you see how neatly I have rang'd them on the chimney, you'd be charm'd! So let me have the rest. (*Caesar puts the other books, and all the papers in his sister's lap, who says when she receives them,*) Well, every body must acknowledge girls are cleverer than boys.

*Caesar.*

O yes, and you particularly. Clare is constantly employ'd in putting by your shreds and rags.

*Viola.*

And if your tutor had not constantly his eye upon you, you would never know where you should find your exercises and translations. (*She looks about her.*) But I fancy I've now got them all.

*Caesar.*

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*Caesar.*

Yes, yes; there's nothing left; so get you gone.

*(Viola goes out.)*

*Caesar* *(putting back the chairs and table in their place.)*

There, so that's done, and we shall now have elbow-room enough. I can't help thinking what fine work we shall be sure to make. However, I am surpris'd they're not yet come. For my part, I can say I'm hardly ever staid for when a rendezvous is once appointed me.

*Viola* *(re-entering once again, and looking round about.)*

Ay, very well: but brother, you must hide that speaking trumpet. If your friends should happen to perceive it, they'll be sure to stun us with their noise.

*Caesar.*

Stay, stay; I'll put it up behind the door, as very likely I shall want it. Let your little friends come now and din me with their chattering, as they us'd to do, and we shall see who'll cry out loudest.

*Viola.*

Stuff! we need but join together; we should very shortly get the upper hand of such a little thing as you.

*Caesar.*

*Caesar.*

O no; for if you ladies have your clappers so well hung, (we gentlemen, possess a fine clear manly voice, that every one respects: as thus — You hear me?

*Viola* (*shrugging up her shoulders.*)

Yes; and have so much respect, as you say, for you, that I'll take myself a way. Farewel, I'll run and join my friends.

*Caesar.*

And bid the servant send me up my visitors when they arrive.

*Viola.*

Yes, yes. (*She withdraws.*)

*Caesar* (*taking up the speaking trumpet.*)

Here's what has often brought me from the furthest corner of the garden, much against my inclination; and I think I hear it still, — So ho! there! Caesar! Caesar! — My young friends live only at the corner of the street. Let's see if I can harken them! — He puts the trumpet to his mouth, (he puts up the window, and cries out!)

Girls and boys come out to play.

The moon doth shine as bright as day:

Come with a whoop, and come with a call,

Come with a good will, or not at all.

(*He leaves the window, and draws near the door.*)

Well, is not this surprising? 'Tis like Harlequin's

enchan-

## BLIND-MAN'S BUFF. 191

enchanted horn. I think I hear them talking to each other on the stairs, (*He listens.*) Yes, yes! the two Bartholomews indeed. (*He puts the trumpet by.*) Suppose I were to jump now on the table, and receive them sitting on my throne? (*He runs to fetch a stool that he may put it on the table; and prepares to take a spring. but the arrival of the two Bartholomews prevents him.*)

### SCENE II.

*Caesar and the two Bartholomews.*

*Caesar.*

Could not you have staid a little at the door till I was mounted on my throne, that I might give you audience, as they say, in all my glory?

*The elder Bartholomew.*

Good indeed! you've no occasion for a throne to look exactly like a King. And active as you are, the throne might very likely cause your majesty a tumble.

*Caesar.*

Why, to say the truth, I've read of many tumbles of that nature in my ancient history.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

And in some sort, such an accident has happen'd to my brother, though he's no great prince. He fell down stairs last week, and hurt his nose considerably.

*The*



*The younger Bartholomew* (stuttering).  
Yes, indee-ee-ee! It pains me sti-i-ill a little,  
and that ma-a-after Martin is a very nau-an-  
hughty boy.

*Caesar.*

Does he design to come to-night?

*The elder Bartholomew.*

I hope he don't: if we had thought he would  
be here, we should not have stirr'd out.

*The younger Bartholomew.*

He o-o-only thinks of mischief.

*Caesar.*

What then has he done?

*The elder Bartholomew.*

We were both going out last Saturday. I stopp'd  
to get a handkerchief: my brother went down  
stairs alone, and as it happen'd, Martin hearing  
some one, came out sily, jump'd agionce upon my  
brother, who was frighted, lost his footing, and  
roll'd down the stairs from top to bottom.

*Caesar.*

Poor Bartholomew! I'm sorry for you. Martin  
looks for all the world as if he lov'd such mischief.  
We shall have his company this evening for the first  
time in our lives: his father begg'd papa would let  
him come and see us.

*The*

*The elder Bartholomew.*

I am sorry for it. We don't speak to one another any longer.

*Caesar.*

My papa suppos'd you all good friends, because you lodge together; and consider'd you would have the greater pleasure, if he came.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

The greater pleasure! we should like to have him ten miles off. Since he has been our neighbour, we have been continually uneasy. He has frequently amus'd himself with breaking windows, and then wants to lay the blame on us.

*Caesar.*

Does no one make complaint about him to his father?

*The elder Bartholomew.*

O! I don't know what to make of him; he's such an odd sort of a man! He scolds a little, pays the damage, and that's all.

*Caesar.*

If I were your papa, I'd quit my lodgings and live somewhere else.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

Yes, so he means to do, and therefore yesterday gave warning; and we're now forbid all manner of connection with this Martin, he's so wicked!

N

Would

Would you think it, very few go by the house, without expecting he will put some trick upon them. Sometimes he diverts himself by squirting puddle water at them, or else pelting them with rotten apples. Nay, he'll sometimes fasten rabbits tails or bits of rags behind their back, at which the people, when they see it, all burst out a laughing. Then too he has what he calls his caxen fishery.

*Caesar.*

Caxen fishery!

*The elder Bartholomew.*

Yes: he'll take the people's wigs off, as they pass him, with a hook, as you would carp. When some poor man or other stops before his window to converse with any one may have met with, Martin instantly goes up to the balcony, with a string suspended from a fishing rod, and at the end of it a hook, with which he jerks the poor man's wig off. Then he runs and ties it to a dog he has before provided for the purpose, after which he drives the creature out into the street, and off he sets that instant, so that the poor perriwig has frequently been dragg'd for twenty minutes thro' the mud, before its owner can lay hold of it again.

*Caesar.*

But this is more than mere amusement!

*Blind W*

*M*

*The*

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*The elder Bartholomew.*

And yet this is nothig to the stories I could tell you. Why, he lames or bruises all the dogs and cats he can by any means get hold of. Neither is it long ago, when one of his relations broke a leg, by slipping down upon the stairs where Martin had been scattering peas on purpose. Ay, it 's so; or else our name is not Bartholomew. And for the servants, I am sure his father would not get one to attend him, if he did not pay extraordinary wages.

*Caesar.*

Shall I tell you now? I long to see him. I like boys a little merry.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

Nothing is more natural: but Martin's mirth is not like other children's. You, I know, love laughing at your heart; but would not, for the world, hurt any one; whereas this wicked fellow laughs at bumps and bruises.

*Caesar.*

O that does not fright me in the least. I shall be much more pleas'd in paying him as he deserves.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

If he should come, my brother won't offend you by withdrawing? He would do him some fresh mischief.

*The younger Bartholomew.*

Ye-e-es, I'll go.

*Caesar.*

No, no: we're ancient friends; and positively no new-comer shall divide us. I'll take care and manage him, I warrant you. — But don't I hear a noise upon the stairs? — 'Tis Martin. — No, I see my sister and her company.

### SCENE III.

*Caesar, the two Bartholomews, Viola, Clara, Rosamund, Beatrice, Laura.*

*Viola.*

Your humble servant, my good friends! but why not seated, brother? You might easily have got the gentleman a chair apiece, since they've been with you. There has, sure been time enough.

*Caesar.*

As if we did not know 'tis usual to receive the ladies standing.

*Viola.*

I am charm'd to find you know your duty; but where's master Martin? (*to the Bartholomews.*) I suppos'd you would have brought him with you.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

'Tis a long time now, thank Heaven, since we've been separated from him.

*Rosamund.*



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*Rosamund.*

Is he then unluckier than Viola's brother?

*Laura* (archly.)

He 'd be certainly unlucky then indeed!

*Beatrice.*

Viola's brother! He 's a very lamb to Martin. We have known him for a long time. Have we not, dear sister?

*Laura.*

That we have, and he has play'd me many a trick.

*Beatrice.*

He was very thick with Anthony my brother; but he 's rid entirely of him now: why, he 's the sorriest fellow in the world!

*Viola.*

O, as for that, my brother's even with him there.

*Rosamund.*

But to do mischief merely for the pleasure of it — there 's the villainy!

*Viola.*

No, no, my brother 's better than that comes to.

*Caesar*

(with an air of irony.)

Do you think so truly? I'm obliged to you!

*Rosamund.*

Well, well, my dear Viola, we'll be under your protection, you're the biggest of us; and besides, at

present you are mistress of the house, and may command him.

*Viola.*

Don't you be afraid. I'll keep him perfectly in bounds.

*Caesar.*

Yes, yes, Viola: you shall take care of the ladies, and for you (*to the Bartholomeus*) I'll take you under my protection.

*The elder Bartholomeus.*

O! he'll hardly think of playing tricks with me. He knows me, I assure you. All I fear for, is my brother.

*The younger Bartholomeus.*

He makes ga-a-me of me! yes a-a-always!

*Laura.*

That 's his way; the least are those he has to do with. He would never vex my sister, — none but me.

*Viola.*

I can believe you: such as he are always cowards; and I think I see a puppy following close upon a cat as long as she keeps running: but if once the cat turns round, and shews her whiskers, then the puppy scampers for it.

*Caesar.*

Well then, sister, you shall be the cat.

*Laura.*

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*Laura.*

And let him see your whiskers.

*Viola.*

But methinks it would not be amiss if we sat down. Though we expect this Mr. Mischief-maker, we've no need, I fancy, to keep standing till he chuses to appear.

*Caesar.*

Hush! here he is.

## SCENE IV.

*Caesar, the two Bartholomeus, Viola, Clare, Rosamund, Beatrice, Laura and Martin.*

*Martin*

(to Caesar and his sister, making them bow.)

Your servant. Your papa was pleased to let me wait upon you: so I'm come to spend the evening with you.

*Viola.*

We are glad to see you, and shall have a deal of pleasure in your company; at least my brother.

*Clare.*

Yes, indeed; he wants for good example.

*Caesar.*

Do I? So your good example, you would have the gentleman suppose, is not sufficient.

N 4

*Viola.*

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*Viola.*

Well, a truce to compliments. As mistress of the house, 'tis necessary I should let you know who's who. This tall young lady, in the first place, is Miss Rosamund Ducane,

*Martin*, (with a banter,) on or 'er 'er

I'm charm'd you tell me so.

*Viola.*

And these are the Miss —

*Martin.*

O, I know them very well, This here's (pointing to Beatrice) my lady — what's her name? Pentweazle, that will take you off the company, as simple as she seems: And there's (pointing to Laura, and limping round the room) Miss Up-and-down, who broke her leg by running from the rod. This gentleman, (the eldest Bartholomew) observe him, he's a grave-wise Grecian; that looks straight before him as he walks, as if he pitied us poor silly children. And this Peter Grievous, my good little friend, (showing the younger Bartholomew, and letting fall his hat) is 'Squire A-a-a-a-atkinson, whose dear mamma forgot, poor creature! to untie his tongue when he was born. (The children seem surprized, and gaze at one another.)

*Caesar.*

And who am I, sir, for methinks you seem quite clever at this sort of portrait-painting.

*Martin.*

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*Martin.*

O, I'm not sufficiently acquainted with you yet, to take your likeness: but I'll let you have it soon.

*Viola.*

For you, sir, I could draw you at a glance, and I must tell you, the similitude would not be very pleasing. I could never have supposed it possible that any well bred little gentleman, as I imagine you affect to be, should think of turning natural defects into a theme for banter. If my little friends were not sincerely such, they would have reason to reproach me for exposing them to your indecency. But they can see I could not have expected half so much myself.

*Martin.*

Why, Mr. Caesar, I protest your sister's mighty eloquent. You need not go to church on Sundays, having such a charming preacher in the house.

*Caesar.*

She 's tolerably skill'd, when any one is to be told the truth; and 'tis on that account we love her, both my sister and myself, with all our heart.

*Martin.*

Well, well, you see I'm likewise tolerably skill'd in telling truth; and therefore you'll love me too, with all your heart. (he bows to Viola.) I ask your



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pardon, miss, for having taken your employment off your hands, that are yourself so clever at it!

*Viola.*

Your excuses and your bow are both an insult; but an insult, such as I despise. Though were they on the other hand sincere, they'd hardly make atonement for so coarse an incivility. If I had not considered every word you said as meant in joke, however gross I cannot but suppose it, I should know what suited me to do, and should have done it likewise. Let me therefore beg, sir, you'd indulge in no more freedoms of this nature, if you mean we should remain together.

*Martin* (somewhat embarrassed.)

Well, but I can see you do not understand a little harmless piece of banter. Let's be friends. (he holds out his hand.)

*Viola* (giving her's.)

With all my heart, sir; but provided —

*Martin* (turning suddenly his back upon *Viola*, and addressing young *Bartholomew*.)

You, too, are an honest little fellow; and I'll shake hands with you. (He hesitates to give his hand, and therefore *Martin* seizing on it, shakes his arm so rudely, that he falls a crying.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

Mr. Martin!

nothing

2. M

*Caesar*

BLIND - MANS BUFF. 203

*Caesar* (laying hold of Martin's arm.)

Pray, sir, let this child alone; or —

*Martin.*

Well — or what? — my little Jack - a - dandy.

*Caesar* (boldly.)

I am little, I acknowledge, but yet strong enough; and so you'll find me, when my friends require to be defended.

*Martin.*

Say you so? in that case I should like to be among them. But beforehand, if you please, we'll have a tussle, just to see how you'll be able to defend them. (Martin on a sudden tries to fling him down; but Caesar stands upon his ground, and Martin falls. The company rush in to part them.)

*Caesar.*

But one moment, if you please, young ladies. I'll not do him any harm. Well, Mr. Martin, how pray do you find yourself? I fancy I'm your master.

*Martin* (struggling.)

Take your knee off — or you'll stifle me.

*Caesar.*

No, no; you must not think of getting up, unless you first ask pardon.

*Martin,* (furiously.)

Pardon!

*Caesar.*

*Caesar.*

Yes, sir, and of all the company, as you have certainly offended all the company.

*Martin.*

Well, well; I do ask pardon.

*Caesar.*

If again you should insult us, be assured we'll send you down into the cellar till to-morrow morning, which will surely cool your courage. That's much better than to hurt you. We don't think you worth the trouble. — Rise. (*He gets from off him, and when both are up, continues.*) You have no right to be offended; for remember 'twas yourself began the contest. (*Martin seems ashamed, and being up, keeps silent.*)

*Rosamund* (*aside to Clare.*)

I could never have supposed your brother half so valiant!

*Clare.*

O, a lion's hardly bolder! and yet, Rosamund, he never quarrels. He's in short, although I say it, the best temper'd little fellow in the world. (*to the Company.*) But what are we about? we ought to think of some amusement for the evening.

*Caesar.*

Certainly we ought, or why are we all come together? Well, what play shall we make choice of? Something funny? what say you, Bartholomew?

*The*

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### *The elder Bartholomew.*

We'll let the ladies chuse. (*Martin makes mouths at Caesar and Bartholomew: the rest pretend as if they did not see him*)

### *Viola.*

There, Catfar; there's a lesson for you: we may chuse. Well then, suppose we play at questions and commands? or possibly you'd like a game at cards much better.

### *Laura.*

I should rather play at something with the least Bartholomew. If you've a picture-book, w'e'll turn it over: won't we?

### *The younger Bartholomew.*

O-o-o-oh yes, yes.

### *Viola.*

With all my heart, sweet dears. I'll carry you up stairs. You'll neither want for pictures, nor yet playthings there.

(*Laura and the least Bartholomew take hold of one another by the hand, and jump for joy.*)

### *Viola (to the ladies.)*

My friends, will you go with me for amusement into my apartment? I've a charming bonnet you'll be pleased to look at!

### *All*

(*together.*)

Yes, yes, yes: let's go.

*The*

*The elder Bartholomew.*

Will you accept my hand as far as your apartment, Miss Viola?

*Viola.*

Rather let Miss Rosamund or Beatrice, if they think proper, have it.

*(The elder Bartholomew presents his hand to Beatrice, who happens to stand next him.)*

*Martin.*

What then do you mean to leave me by myself here?

*Caesar.*

No, sir, these young ladies will excuse me. So I'll stay: but I'm obliged to leave you for a moment.

*Martin.*

Are you? but I'll follow you. I don't like to be left alone by night, and in a house to which I'm such a stranger.

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.

*Caesar and Martin.*

*Martin.*

The truth is, I was apprehensive you might think of playing me some trick; so I accompanied you.

But



## BLIND-MANS-BUFF. 207

But we're now returned, and being all alone, we may devise some mirth between us.

*Caesar.*

Very willingly; I ask no better: so let's think a little.

*Martin.*

We must have some fun, I fancy, with the least Bartholomew.

*Caesar.*

If by fun you mean some trick to hurt him, I say no: I'll not be in a joking humour: so pray leave him out, if you are bent on mischief.

*Martin.*

They informed me you were always merry, and loved something funny at your heart.

*Caesar.*

And so I do: but, notwithstanding, without hurt to any one. However, let me know what sort of fun you had resolved on.

*Martin.*

Look you: here are two large needles. I will stick them with the points both upward in the bottom of two chairs, that common eyes shall not discern them. You shall in the next place offer two of these young ladies the two chairs, for very likely they'd suspect I meant them mischief of some sort or other, and they'll naturally both sit down: but  
figure

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figure to yourself what strange grimaces they'll both make! Ha! ha! ha! ha! It makes me die a laughing now I do but think what faces we shall have to look at! Ay, ay! and your prudish sister, too, will find the matter quite diverting.

*Caesar.*

But suppose I were to treat you just in the same manner, would you like it?

*Martin.*

O treat me! that's different; but those little idiots. —

*Caesar.*

So you call them idiots, do you, since they are not mischievous?

*Martin.*

At least you're mighty formal and precise. Shall I then mention something else?

*Caesar.*

Yes, do.

*Martin.*

Then I've some thread as strong as whip-cord in my pocket. I'll thread one of these great needles with a little of it; and as soon as they are all come down, one of us shall go up politely towards them, make a deal of scraping, and wry faces, while the other, keeping still behind, shall sew their gowns together. They'll all want to dance, as you may guess;

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guess; so up we'll come, and take them out. —  
Ha! ha! you know the rest; ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

*Caesar.*

Yes, to tear their gowns, and get them anger  
when their parents find it out?

*Martin.*

Why there's the pleasure.

*Caesar.*

What! have you no pleasure then in any thing  
but doing mischief?

*Martin.*

But it does not injure me.

*Caesar.*

O ho! I understand: you think of no one but  
yourself, and all the world is nothing to you!

*Martin.*

Well: but we are come together to divert our-  
selves; and we must positively have some laughing.  
So suppose we frighten Laura and the least Bartho-  
lomew.

*Caesar.*

But that's quite wrong. Supposing any one should  
frighten you?

*Martin.*

With all my heart, if any one's but able. I'm  
afraid of nothing.

O

*Caesar*

## BLIND-MAN'S-BUFF.

— *Caesar* (*aside*.)

Say you so? — That we shall see perhaps. —  
(*aloud to Martin*.) Well, about this frightening?

— *Martin*.

I've an ugly mask at home. I'll run and fetch it.  
And do you, when I am gone, contrive to bring  
the little children down, and you shall see — I'll  
not be absent half a minute.

— *Caesar* (*aside*.)

Good! — The mask shall be for you. — (*to Mar-  
tin, calling him back*.) But Martin! Martin!

— *Martin*.

What's the matter?

— *Caesar*.

'Twill be better we should come upon them  
where we are, if I can bring the others down: for  
when there are but two or three in this part of  
the house, there sometimes comes a spirit; and in  
that case, we ourselves should be but badly off.

— *Martin*.

What is it you tell me of your spirits?

— *Caesar*.

Yes; 'tis true. At first one hears a noise, and  
then a phantom with a lighted torch glides by, and  
then the room seems all on fire. — (*He draws back, as  
if afraid*.) Methinks I see it now.

— *Martin*.

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*Martin* (a little frightened.)

See what? — O Lord! — And what can bring the phantom here?

*Caesar*, (drawing *Martin* towards a corner, and then whispering to him.)

The reason, as we're told, is this; there was a miser lived here formerly, and he was robbed one night of all his money. In despair he cut his throat, and now from time to time his ghost goes up and down.

*Martin* (in a tremble.)

O ho, I'll stay no longer here, unless you get more company.

*Caesar*.

But recollect how brave you were just now.

*Martin*.

You must not fancy I'm afraid: — but — but — but — but — but I'll go fetch my mask.

*Caesar*.

Do, do: and I'll prepare things here. — What pleasure we shall have!

*Martin* (with a grin.)

O! enough to make one die with laughing.

*Caesar*.

They'll be finely frighten'd!

O 2

*Martin*.



*Martin.*

That they will! and therefore I'll make haste.  
I'm home and back again — You'll see how soon.  
(*He goes out.*)

*Caesar* (alone.)

Ah ah! you want to frighten others, and are not  
afraid yourself! Well, well! I've thought of some-  
thing that will fright you, or I'm very much mis-  
taken.

## SCENE II.

*Caesar, Viola, Clare, Rosamund, Beatrice,  
and the elder Bartholomew.*

*Viola.*

We saw Martin run across the street this mo-  
ment! what's the matter? Have you had a quarrel?

*Caesar.*

On the other hand, he thinks me his best friend,  
I've seemed disposed to go shares with him in a  
trick he means to put upon the little ones above;  
but 'tis himself he'll trick, and never wish to come  
a third time here.

*Viola.*

Well, what's your project?

*Caesar.*

You shall know ere long. At present I've no  
time to lose, for every thing must be in readiness  
against

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against his coming back: so, ladies, I'll request permission to be absent for about five minutes.

*Rosalund.*

Yes, go, go: but don't stay longer. We are all impatient to be told what you design.

*Caesar.*

I shall consider it my duty to inform you when I've done without. So once more with your leave, I'll come again in less, 'tis very likely, than five minutes. (*He goes out.*)

*Viola.*

Ah! ah! ah! — Two pretty fellows got together! we shall see what good comes out between them! one's well worth the other.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

O, for Heaven's sake, Miss Viola, don't do such dishonour to my friend, your brother, as to name him and that wicked Martin thus together.

*Beatrice.*

You are in the right, Bartholomew. One's nothing but politeness, and the other truly savage.

*Clare.*

Savage as he is, however, I'd lay a wager Caesar will be found his master.

*Rosamund.*

What a piece of service would not Caesar do us, could he clear the house of such a fellow! We shall have no pleasure all the evening if he stays among us.

*Viola.*

I'm afraid, however, Caesar will proceed too far, and think himself permitted to do any thing against this Martin.

*The elder Bartholomew.*

He can never do enough; and though his scheme should be a little hard on Martin, there will be instruction in it: 'tis the greatest service one can do him: and his father, I'm persuaded, will be pleased with Caesar, when he hears what pains he has been at to teach his son. Alas! he'd part with half his fortune, to have Martin like him.

*Beatrice.*

So Viola, don't you go about to thwart your brother's good intentions.

*Viola.*

But, my dear Miss Beatrice, I'm in a ticklish situation: I am now instead of my mamma, and cannot possibly let any thing go forward she would not approve of.

*Beatrice.*

Let him have his way. We'll take the blame of what he does upon ourselves.

*Clara.*

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*Clare.*

Yes, let him, sister. War, I say, war, war for ever with the wicked!

*Caesar (returning joyfully.)*

— I have settled every thing, and Martin may appear whenever he thinks proper. We'll receive him.

*Viola.*

But I hope you'll tell me —

*Rosamund.*

Yes, we'll be too in the plot; and more than that, assist you if we can.

*Caesar.*

No, ladies, that's not necessary. There's a little violence I must acknowledge in my plot, and therefore I'll not make you parties. I've been settling every thing with Roger in the stable. He conceives my meaning clearly, and will second it with great dexterity.

*Viola.*

But still, you don't acquaint me —

*Caesar.*

This is all of the contrivance you need know. We'll go to Blind Man's Buff, that Martin may suspect no harm on his return. I'll let myself be caught, and he or she that blinds me must take care that I may have an opportunity of seeing

through the handkerchief, and fixing upon Martin, After he is blinded, you shall steal into the closet, take away the lights, and leave us both together, When I want your aid, I'll call you,

*The elder Bartholomew.*

But if Martin should proceed to thrash you in your tête à tête.

*Caesar.*

Proceed to thrash me! You observed how easily I flung him down. I'm not afraid of such a one as he, 'for I have found he's nothing but a coward. So that's fixed: but first, we must have both the little ones down stairs, or Martin might go up and frighten them while we are talking here together. So pray, sister; (to *Clare*) go and bring them down.

*Clare.*

Yes, yes. (*She goes out.*)

*Viola.*

But, brother, I'm not clear I should permit you —

*Beatrice.*

What's the matter? let him do, I tell you, as he pleases.

*Caesar.*

Yes, yes, sister; and rely on my discretion. You are sensible I don't like mischief, for the sake of mischief: therefore he shall not have half the punishment he merits, but come off when I have frightened



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tened him a little; and that's all the harm I mean to do him.

*Viola.*

Well then, Caesar, on your promise of discretion —

*Caesar.*

Yes, I promise you no less. So let's make haste, and put the things to rights, that all may be in order here too when he comes. — (*They put away the chairs and table. Clare in the interim comes down with Laura and Bartholomew.*)

*Caesar* (*going up to Laura and Bartholomew.*)

— Come, come, my little friends, into this closet; but take care and don't make any noise, or Martin very possibly will hear you.

*Clare.*

I'll conduct them: there's a book of pictures in it; and I'll stay to shew them any thing they like.

*Laura.*

I thought the tea was ready: May we not stay here with you till it comes in?

*Caesar.*

I'll fetch you when the servant brings it: but at present you must go into the closet: Martin wants to frighten you, and I'll not let him.

*The younger Bartholomew.*

Ye-e-e-e-es; let 's go, my de-e-e-e-ar.  
(*Clare takes up a candle, and goes in with Laura and the other.*)

*Caesar.*

We comprehend, I fancy, what we are to do? My eyes not wholly covered, and, whenever I may give the signal, you must take away the light, and get into the closet; but particularly perfect silence.

*Rosamund.*

Yes, we understand you.

*Caesar.*

I believe I hear a noise? hush! hush! hush! (*he listens at the door.*)

Yes, yes; 'tis he! be quick, let one of you be blinded.

*Rosamund.*

I'll begin. Who takes my handkerchief? (*Beatrice blinds Rosamund, and they begin to run about.*)

### SCENE III.

*Caesar, Viola, Rosamund, Beatrice, and Martin.*

(*Martin as he enters, pinches Rosamund, on which she throws her hands out, and lays hold of Martin.*)

*Rosamund.*

'Tis Mr. Martin. I well know him by his pinching me.

*Caesar.*

'Tis Mr. Martin; but he was not in the play. You must begin again.

*Martin.*

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*Martin.*

Undoubtedly, and Mr. Caesar's in the right.

*Rosamund.*

Well, be it so: but if again I catch you, it shall all be fair. Remember, I have warned you.

*Martin.*

O yes, yes. (*he takes Caesar aside, and lets him see a little of the mask.*) What think you of it?

*Caesar* (*feigned to be frightened*).

O how frightful! I should certainly be terrified at seeing it myself. Well, hide it carefully: we'll play a little, and then slip away.

*Martin* (*whispering Caesar.*)

Yes, yes, we will: but I must, first of all, do something that may vex the ladies.

*Caesar* (*whispering Martin.*)

I'll go up to Rosamund, and turn her round: if she should catch me, she'll believe 'tis you, and must set out again.

*Martin* (*whispering Caesar.*)

Good! good! I'll have a little fun too with her.

*Beatrice.*

Well? and when will you have told each other all your secrets? Two fine gentlemen! why don't you see the game stands still?

*Martin.*

You need not stay for us; we're ready.

*Caesar*

*Caesar* (keeping near Miss Rosamund, as if he wished to pull her by the gown, and seeing Martin go to fetch a chair,) —  
(*Aside*)

Now, Miss Rosamund, I'll put myself into your way.

(*Martin brings a chair, and puts it so that Rosamund may tumble over it: but Caesar takes the chair away, and puts himself instead, upon his hands and feet, with so much noise: that Rosamund may hear him. As she slides along her feet, as if at hazard, she encounters Caesar, floops and seizes him.*)

*Rosamund* (after having felt about his cape and wrists, and seeming doubtful.

It's Master Caesar.

*Caesar*, (in appearance disconcerted.)

Yes, indeed; I'm taken. What ill luck! so soon?

*Rosamund*, (pulling off the bandage.)

O, ho! you wanted then to throw me down! I thought such tricks were Martin's only; but it shan't be long before I take revenge.

(*She covers Caesar's eyes, but so that he can see a little; leads him towards the middle of the room, and then, as is the custom of the game, asks Caesar.*) How many horses has your father in his stable?

*Caesar*.

Three; black, white and grey.

*Rosa-*

*Rosamund.*

Turn about three times, and catch whom you may.

(*Caesar gropes his way from place to place, and lets himself be jostled as they please. Miss Rosamund particularly plagues him; he pretends to follow her, but all at once turns round, and falls on Martin.*)

*Caesar.*

Ah! ha! I've got you! have I? It's a boy, it's Martin! (*pulling off the handkerchief.*) Yes; yes; I'm not mistaken.

*Martin* (*whispering Caesar.*)

Why lay hold of me?

*Caesar* (*whispering Martin.*)

Don't mind it. You shall catch Bartholomew. I'll push him towards you.

*Martin* (*whispering Caesar.*)

Do; and you shall see I'll make him squeak: I'll pinch him till the very blood spins out.

(*Caesar begins to cover Martin's eyes, and gives his company a nod, as he had settled it. Bartholomew, assisted by the little ladies, takes away the lights, and all together run into an adjoining closet, without making any noise.*)

*The elder Bartholomew* (*just before he steps into the closet.*)

Well; and have you finish'd? O make haste. You take a deal of time. What mischief are you whispering to each other?

(*As*



(At this instant the groom presents himself at the door; he has a lighted torch in one hand, and a stick beneath it in the other, with a large full — bottom wig upon it. He is cover'd head and all, with Mr. Milner's gown, that trails along upon the ground behind him. Caesar beckons him to stay a little at the entrance, while he's blinding Martin.)

*Robert*, (putting Martin in the middle of the room.)

How many horses has your father in his stable?

*Martin*.

Three; black, white and grey,

*Caesar*.

Turn about — (pretending to be angry with the others.)

Be quiet pray, young ladies, and don't quit your places till the game's begun. — Turn about three times, and catch whom you may.

(While Martin turns about, Caesar runs to get the speaking trumpet, bids the groom untie a chain he has about his waist, which falling makes a hideous noise, and then cries out lustily himself.) The ghost! the ghost! Run, Martin, for your life.

(He claps the door to violently, hides himself behind the ghost, and speaking through the trumpet, says.) 'Tis you that come to steal my treasure then?

*Martin*, (in a shiver, and without sufficient courage to pull off the bandage.)

Fire! fire! Bartholomew! where are you, Caesar? murder! murder! Rosamund!

*Caesar*

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*Caesar* (speaking through the trumpet.)

I've scar'd 'em all away. — Pull off your bandage, and look at me.

(*Martin without pulling off the bandage puts both hands before his face, retiring as the ghost advances on him.*)

*Caesar.*

Pull it off, I say —

(*Martin, upon this, makes shift to pull the bandage down, that falls about his neck. He dares not lift his eyes up; but at last, when he observes the ghost, he gives a cry, and has not power to move.*)

*Caesar.*

I know you well: your name is Martin.

(*Martin hearing this, runs up and down to get away: he finds the door shut fast, falls down upon his knees, holds out his hands, and turns away his head.*)

*Caesar.*

What you think to escape me! do you?

*Martin* (after several efforts.)

I've done nothing to you. You were never robb'd by me.

*Caesar.*

Never robb'd by you? You're capable of any villainy! Who is it squirts at people in the street? Who fastens rabbits tails behind their backs? Who filches for their wigs? Who lames poor dogs and cats? Who sticks up pins in chairs to prick his friends when they sit down? And who has in his pocket

pocket even now, a mask to frighten two poor little children with! —

*Martin.*

I have done all this! indeed I own it! but for heaven's sake pardon me, and I'll not do so any more.

*Caesar.*

Who'll answer for you?

*Martin.*

Those you've scar'd away, if you'll but call 'em.

*Caesar.*

Do you promise me yourself?

*Martin.*

Yes, yes; upon my honour.

*Caesar.*

Well then, I take pity on you: but remember, had it been my pleasure, I might easily fly with you through the window.

(Here the phantom shakes his torch, that gives a glare like lightning, and then goes out: The frightened Martin falls face downward on the ground.)

## SCENE THE LAST.

*Martin, Caesar, the Groom, and Mr.*

*Milner.*

*Mr. Milner* (entering with a candle in his hand.)

What's all this disturbance?

*Martin*

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*Martin* (without looking up.)

Is it I then make it? Pray, pray, don't come near me!

*Mr. Milner* (perceiving *Martin* on the ground.)

Who can this be on the ground?

*Martin.*

You know me well enough, and have already taken pity on me.

*Mr. Milner.*

I already taken pity on you!

*Martin.*

'Twas not I that robb'd you.

*Mr. Milner.*

Robb'd me! what does all this mean? and don't I know you, master *Martin*? —

*Martin.*

Yes, yes; that's my name, good ghost: so pray don't hurt me.

*Mr. Milner.*

I'm astonish'd! why in such a posture? (He puts down the light, holds out his hand, and lifts him up.)

*Martin* (struggling first of all, but knowing *Mr. Milner* afterwards.)

*Mr. Milner*, is it you? (his features brighten.) He's gone then! is he? (he looks round about him, sees the

P

ghost,

ghost, and turns away again.) There, there he stands! — the phantom! — don't you see him?

(*Caesar brings the children from the closet. Laura and Bartholomew are frightened at the phantom; but they rest burst out a laughing.*)

*Mr. Milner.*

Well! what signifies all this?

*Caesar* (coming forward.)

Let me explain the whole, papa. This phantom is your groom; and we have put him on your wig and gown.

*The Groom* (letting fall his disguise.)

Yes, sir, 'tis I.

*Mr. Milner.*

A sorry sort of sport this, Caesar!

*Caesar.*

True; but ask the company if master Martin has not well deserv'd to be thus frighten'd. He design'd to frighten Laura and Bartholomew: I only wish'd to hinder him. Let him but shew the frightful mask he has about him.

*Mr. Milner* (to Martin.)

Is this true?

*Martin* (giving him the mask.)

I can't deny it: here it is, sir.

*Mr.*



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*Mr. Milner.*

You have nothing then but what you merit.

*Rosamund.*

It was we persuaded Miss Viola to permit her brother might make use of this device to punish Martin.

*Beatrice.*

If you knew besides, fir, all the other tricks he meant to play us. —

*Mr. Milner.*

What, fir, is it thus then you announce yourself, the first time you set foot within my doors? You have been disrespectful to me in the person of my children, who were pleas'd to think you would become their guest. You have been disrespectful to these ladies, that I need not say you should have honoured and regarded. So be gone! Your father, when he comes to know you have been thus turn'd out of doors, will see how necessary it is to correct the vices of your heart. I will not permit your detestable example to corrupt my children. Go, and never let me see you here again! (*Martin is confounded, and withdraws.*) And you my friends, although the circumstances of the case may very possible excuse what you have done, yet never for the time to come, indulge yourselves in such a sport. The fears which children are affected with,

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in such a tender age as yours, may possibly be followed by the worst of consequences during their whole life. Avenge yourselves upon the wicked only by behaving better; and remember after the example Martin has afforded you, that by intending harm to others, you will ofteneft bring it down upon yourselves.

THE END.

THE

THE  
FIRE BY NIGHT,  
A DRAMA,  
IN ONE ACT.

## Persons.

*Mr. and Mrs. Vernon.*

*Adrian,*

*their Children.*

*Constance,*

*Meadows,*

*a Farmer.*

*Bridget,*

*his Wife.*

*Hodge,*

*their Children.*

*Phebe,*

*Godfrey.*

*Mr. Vernon's Groom.*

*SCENE, The entrance of a village, in the  
environs of London, in a part of which,  
contiguous to the fields, appears a fire.  
And on one side is a farm-house with a  
pump, and on the other side a hill.*

THE  
FIRE BY NIGHT,  
A DRAMA.

SCENE I.

*Adrian* (running by a path conducting round the hill: his clothes and hair are out of order. He looks back and sees the fire burst forth with aggravated fury.)

O Heaven! O Heaven! all burning still! what volumes of thick smoke and flame! What's now become of my papa, maina and sister? Am I an unhappy orphan? Heaven take pity on me, and let them be safe; for they are more to me than all the world beside — Without them what should I do? (Oppressed with grief and weariness, he leans against a tree. The farm-house door now opens, and the little peasant Hodge, who has his breakfast in his hand, comes out.)

*Hodge*, (without observing Adrian.)

So it does not finish then, this fire? What could possess my father to go poking with his horses, just



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into the middle of it! But the sun's now rising.  
He'll ere long come back. I'll sit down here, and  
wait till he returns.

*(He goes to sit down by the tree, and sees the little  
Adrian.)*

Hey! hey! who's here? a fine young gentleman!  
what brings you out so early as it is, my pretty  
master?

*Adrian.*

Ah! my little friend, I neither know at present  
where I am, nor whither I am going.

*Hodge.*

How! mayhap you live in town? and very likely  
where the fire is?

*Adrian.*

Yes, indeed, I have escaped. I cannot well tell you  
in what manner.

*Hodge.*

Is your house in flames?

*Adrian.*

'Tis in our street the fire broke out, I was in  
bed, and sleeping very soundly. My papa ran up  
to snatch me out of bed: the servants dressed me  
in a hurry, and one carried me directly through the  
fire, that blazed as we went forward, round  
about us.

*Hodge.*

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*Hodge.*

Poor dear little fellow!

*(Somebody from the house cries out, Hodge! Hodge! But Hodge is listening to the little Adrian, with so much attention, that he does not hear it.)*

SCENE II.

*Adrian, Hodge, Bridget and Phebe.*

*Bridget, (to Phebe, at the entrance.)*

I hope he is not got away, that he may see the fire: I've surely cause enough to tremble for his father's danger.

*Phebe.*

No, no, mother: here he is. Ah! ha! he's speaking to a little gentleman.

*Bridget. (to Hodge.)*

Why not make answer, when I call'd you?

*Hodge.*

Have you really been calling me? I did not hear you. I was listening to this poor boy here.

*Bridget.*

Poor! what has happened to him?

*Hodge.*

He was like to have been burnt alive. His house was all in flames, he tells me, when they got him out.

P 5

*Bridget.*

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*Bridget.*

How pale the poor dear fellow is! And how did they contrive to save you then, my little sir?

*Adrian.*

Our helper put me on his shoulders, being bid to take me to a village where I had been nursed; but in the street they stopped him, wanting hands to work. I fell a crying, when I saw myself alone; at which, a good old woman took me by the hand, and brought me out of town, directing me to walk strait forward; till I saw a village; so I followed her advice, and here I am.

*Bridget.*

And can you tell me what your nurse's name was?

*Adrian.*

No, not now; but I can recollect I used to call my little foster-sister, Phebe.

*Phebe* (earnestly.)

If this little boy were Adrian, mother!

*Adrian.*

Yes! yes! that's my name!

*Bridget.*

What, Adrian, Mr. Vernon's son?

*Adrian.*

O, my good dear nurse! I recollect you now. And this is Phebe, and this, Hodge. (They embrace each other.)

*Bridget.*

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*Bridget (kissing Adrian.)*

How happy must I own I am; I thought of nothing but my poor dear little Adrian, since this fire began. My husband's gone to give you all the assistance he is able. — But how tall he's grown! should you have recollected him? I think not, Phebe.

*Phebe.*

Not immediately, indeed; but when I saw him first, methought I felt my heart beat towards him. 'Tis a long time now since we were last together.

*Adrian.*

I have been a great way off, at school, and came home only three days since, to spend the holidays. Had I remained, I should, at least at present, have known nothing of this day's misfortune. O, papa! mamma! O sister!

*Bridget.*

Poor dear fellow! there's no cause to make yourself uneasy. On the first alarm of fire, so near your quarter of the town, my husband instantly sat out, to see if he could be of any use. I know him. Your papa, mamma, and sister, will be safe, if mortal man can save them. But, my lovely Adrian, you have been up and running these two hours at least, and must be hungry. Will you eat a little?

*Hodge.*

Look ye, master, here's a Yorkshire cake and butter. Take it!

*Adrian.*

*Adrian.*

Master! You were used to call me Adrian, and not master.

*Hodge* (embracing him.)

Well then, Adrian, take my breakfast.

*Phebe.*

Or stay, Adrian, you must sure be dry as well as hungry. I'll go fetch my milk-porridge. I was putting in the bread —

*Adrian.*

No, no, my good friends. I can't have any stomach, till I see my dear papa, mamma, and sister. I'll return and seek them.

*Bridget.*

Do you think of what you're saying? Run into the flames!

*Adrian.*

'Twas in the flames I left them; but it was against my will. I did not like to part with them, but my papa would have it so: he threatened me, and in an angry tone bid Godfrey pay no heed to my resistance. I was forced at last to yield, for fear of putting him into a greater passion. I can't hold out any longer, but, whatever be the danger, must go back to find if they're in safety.

*Bridget.*



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*Bridget.*

I can't let you go, that's certain. Come into the house with us.

*Adrian.*

You have a house then. I, alas! have none.

*Bridget.*

And is not our house your's? I fed you with my milk, and cannot surely then deny you bread. (*She forces him in, and says to Hodge.*) Take care, and stay you here, that you may see your father coming back the sooner, and inform us of it. — But don't run to see the fire. Remember, I forbid you that.

*Hodge (alone.)*

And yet I've half a mind to do so. What a charming furnace it must seem! I don't see clearly, but I think that steeple's down, that had the golden dragon on the top. There's many a poor soul, by this, burnt out of house and home! I pity them, and yet they must not hinder me from finishing my breakfast — (*To Phebe, as entering with a tumbler.*) Well now, sister, you're a dear good girl, indeed, to bring me drink so kindly.

*Phebe.*

O! 'tis not for you. I'm come to get a glass of water for poor Adrian. He'll have neither milk, nor ale, nor wine. "My dear papa, (*says he,*) mamma, and sister, very likely, are at present dry and hungry,

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hungry, and shall I have such nice things? No, no, indeed: let me have therefore nothing but a little water; that will serve me well enough, and more particularly being, as I am, so thirsty."

*Hodge.*

One must own, 'tis notwithstanding something comical, that Adrian should refuse a drop of any thing that's good, because he can't get tidings of his parents.

*Phebe.*

O! I know you well enough! Your sister might be burnt alive, and you not eat a mouthful less on that account. For my part, I should be like Adrian: I should hardly think of eating, if our house were set on fire, and no one could inform me what had happened to my father, mother, or even brother.

*Hodge.*

No, nor I — provided, by the bye, I were not hungry.

*Phebe.*

Can one then be hungry? Look ye, Hodge, I've not the least degree of appetite. To see poor Adrian weep, and take on so, has made me quite forget I had a stomach.

*Hodge.*

So that you won't eat this morning your milk-porridge?

*Phebe.*

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*Phebe.*

What, you want it, after having swallowed your own breakfast, with Yorkshire cake into the bargain?

*Hodge.*

No; I'd only take your breakfast, that, if neither you nor Adrian wished to have it, nothing might be lost; that's all. But let me have the tumbler: I've not drank myself.

*Phebe* (giving him the tumbler.)

Make haste then! Adrian's very dry.

*Hodge* (after drinking.)

Stay, stay, I'll fit it for him.

*Phebe.*

Without rincing it?

*Hodge.*

Do you suppose I've poison in my mouth then?

*Phebe.*

Very proper, truly, with the crumbs about the rim! I'll rince it out myself. Young gentlemen are used to cleanliness, and I would wish to let him see as much propriety and neatness in our cottage, as at home. (She rinces the tumbler, fills it up, and then goes out.)

*Hodge* (alone.)

So, there's my breakfast done. Suppose now I should run to town, and see the fire. I shan't be missed if I set out, stay there but half an hour or so,

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so, and then come back: 'tis nothing but a good sound scolding from my mother. I'll however go a little way, and then determine. 'Tis not more than twelve or thirteen minutes walk before I'm there. — Come, come; faint heart, the proverb tells us, never won fair lady. (*He sets off, but meets his father.*)

SCENE III.

*Hodge and Meadows* (*with a chest upon his shoulders, tired and out of breath.*)

*Hodge.*

What you're come back, father! I was going on a little way to meet you.

*Meadows* (*with anxiety.*)

Were you? And is Adrian here?

*Hodge.*

Yes, yes; not long ago arrived.

*Meadows* (*putting down the chest.*)

Thank God! then the whole family are safe. (*He sits down upon the chest.*) Let me take breath a little.

*Hodge.*

Won't you come in, father?

*Meadows.*

No, no; I'll remain here in the open air, till I'm recovered from my hurry. Go, and tell your mother I'm returned.

*Meadows*

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*Meadows* (alone wiping his face.)

I shall not die then, without having, in my turn, obliged my benefactor.

SCENE IV.

*Meadows, Bridget, Adrian, Hodge, and Phebe.*

*Bridget* (running from the farmhouse, and embracing *Meadows*.)

Ah, my dear! what joy to see you safe come back!

*Meadows* (returns *Bridget* her embrace.)

My life! But *Adrian*, where is he, then? Let me see him.

*Adrian* (running up.)

Here I am. Here, here father! (Looking round about him.) But what, you are alone? Where's my papa, mamma and little sister?

*Meadows.*

Safe, my child; quite safe. — Embrace me!

*Adrian* (jumping up into his arms.)

O what joy!

*Bridget.*

We have been all in very great perplexity. Our neighbours are come back already.

Q

*Meadows.*



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*Meadows.*

They had not their benefactor to preserve, as I had.

*Bridget.*

But the fire, dear Thomas, is it out, and all the mischief over?

*Meadows.*

Over, Bridget! the whole street's in flames. If you could only see the ruins, and the multitude of people! Women with their hair about their ears, all running to and fro, and calling out to find their husbands and poor children; to which, add the sound of bells, the noise of carts and engines, with the crush of houses when the timbers are burnt through, the frightened horses, and the throng of people driving full against you. I can't tell you how I made my way amid the flames that crossed before me, and the burning beams that every moment were so likely to fall down and crush me.

*Bridget.*

Bless us! you congeal my blood with horror!

*Phebe.*

See, see, mother, how his hair and eye-brows are all singed!

*Meadows.*

And see my arm too. Why should I complain, however? Could I but have got away with life, I should

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should not have demurred to lose a limb for Mr. Vernon.

*Bridget.*

How, my dear! a limb?

*Meadows.*

What, wife, to save our benefactor! Was it not through his means we both came together? Are we not indebted to his generosity, not only for this farm, but every thing we have? And what's still more, my jewel, was it not your milk that rear'd his weakly child, now strong and hearty? (*Adrian clings to Bridget*) Did I say I should not have demurred to lose a limb for Mr. Vernon? — I say more: I would have given my life to save him.

*Bridget.*

You have then been able to assist him?

*Meadows.*

Yes, I have that happiness to boast of. He himself, his lady, and his daughter, had scarce got out of their house, as they supposed in safety, when a half-burnt beam fell down into the street before them. Happily, I was not ten yards off: the people fancied they were crushed beneath its weight, and ran away. I heard their cries, came back, and rushing through the burning ruins, brought them off. I had already saved this chest you see before you, and my cart, besides, is loaded with the greatest part of their most valuable furniture.

Q 2

*Adrian.*

244 THE FIRE BY NIGHT.

*Adrian.*

Be sure, my father will most richly recompence you.

*Meadows.*

I am recompenced already, my dear little friend! Your father did not very likely think of such a service at my hands, and I have saved him. In that thought, I am much better paid than in receiving any recompence. But this is not the whole: ere long, he will doubtless be here, and all his family and people.

*Adrian.*

What then, shall I see them quickly?

*Meadows.*

Yes, my Adrian. But run, wife, and make a little preparation to receive them: let some ale be drawn, and have the cows milked instantly. Air sheets to put on all our beds; and as for us, we'll all take up our lodging in the stable.

*Bridget.*

Be it so. I'll play my part, I warrant you.

SCENE V.

*Meadows, Adrian, Hodge, and Phebe.*

*Meadows.*

And I'll go put the hay up in some kind of order in the barn, and make a little room for those who may come hither, and require some shelter. All the fields,

## THE FIRE BY NIGHT. 245

fields, alas, are covered with them! I imagine I still see them! some struck speechless, gaze with absolute insensibility, while they behold their houses burning, or else fall down on the ground, fatigued and frightened! others run along like madmen, wring their hands, or pull their hair up by the roots, and uttering fearful cries, attempt to force their passage through a line of soldiers, who with bayonets keep them off, that they may save the sufferer's property from being plundered.

*Phebe.*

O my poor dear Adrian! had you been there, they would have trod you under foot.

*Meadows.*

As soon as they bring back my horses, I'll go out again, and take up all the children, women, and old men I meet with. Had I been the poorest person in the village, this misfortune would have rendered me the richest: since the unhappy I shall succour, will belong to me.

*(He stoops to take the chest up.)*

*Hodge.*

Dear father, let me help you.

*Meadows.*

No, no: have a care; 'tis far too heavy for your strength. Go rather, and bid Humphries heat the oven, and put all our kitchen things in order; and

246 THE FIRE BY NIGHT.

let Carter know I want some flour sent in: these miserable people that are burnt out of their habitations shall at least find werewithal to satisfy their wants! Thank God! I'm not so poor, that any one applying to my charity should die for want of food. If I had nothing else, I'd give them my last bit of bread. (*He and Hodge go out.*)

SCENE VI.

*Adrian and Phebe.*

*Phebe.*

O that I'd share with you too, Adrian. Who, alas! would have supposed, I should have ever seen you in your present situation!

*Adrian.*

Who indeed, my dearest Phebe? for 'tis very hard in one night to lose every thing.

*Phebe.*

Be comforted, however, my dear friend; for don't you recollect, how happy we were once together here, when we were less a great deal than at present. Well, we'll be again as happy with each other. Do you fear you can want any thing, as long as I have any thing to give you.

*Adrian (taking Phebe by the hand.)*

No, I don't indeed: but then I thought it would have been my part to make you happy, get you a good



## THE FIRE BY NIGHT. 247

good husband, as papa has often said in joke, and take care of your children, like my own.

*Phebe.*

Well, now I must contrive to do all this myself; and when we love each other, 'tis exactly the same thing. I'll get you all the finest flowers I can make free with in our garden, and whatever fruit they'll let me gather. You shall also have my bed, and I'll sleep all night long upon the ground beside you.

*Adrian* (embracing her.)

O my dear, dear Phebe! how I ought to love you!

*Phebe.*

You shall see what care I'll take of Constance likewise. I'll be always with you both. We drank, I need not tell you, the same milk; and is not that as if you were my brother, pray, and I your sister?

*Adrian.*

Yes, and you shall always be my sister, and I don't know which I shall henceforward be most fond of, you or Constance. I'll present you also to papa, that you may be his daughter: but when, think you, will he come?

*Phebe.*

Why make yourself uneasy? you've been told he's safe.

Q 4

*Adrian.*

248 THE FIRE BY NIGHT.

*Adrian.*

But my papa is just like your's; and who can tell but he'll go back and get into the flames to save some friend or other. I must therefore be uneasy till I see him once again. But hark ye! don't I hear a tread on t'other side the hill? If it were only he!

SCENE VII.

*Adrian, Phebe, and Godfrey.*

*Adrian.*

Ah, Godfrey!

*Godfrey.*

Ah, my little master! you are safe then?

*Adrian.*

Truly, there's great need to talk about my safety! Where's papa, mamma, and Constance? are they with you?

*Godfrey* (not knowing what to say.)

With me?

*Adrian.*

Yes, you have not left them sure behind?

*Godfrey.*

Behind? (turning about) they're not behind me.

*Adrian.*

They are not come with you, then?

*Godfrey.*

## THE FIRE BY NIGHT. 249

*Godfrey.*

Unless they're here, I don't know where they are.

*Adrian (impatiently.)*

You don't come here to seek them? do you?

*Godfrey (in confusion.)*

Don't be frightened, my dear little master. —  
Are they not come hither?

*Phebe.*

None but Adrian.

*Adrian.*

He's confounded, and has some bad news to tell me! — They are lost, even after all good Meadows' pains to save them.

*Godfrey.*

Hear me. — There's no cause, at least I hope so, to alarm yourself. About an hour or forty minutes after they had forced me from you to assist the sufferers, I found means to get into the crowd. — Dear Master Adrian, don't however fright yourself; but so it is indeed. — I ran about the ruins to discover where my master was, but could not come at any tidings of him; no, nor yet my mistress, nor Miss Constance. I enquired of every one I met, if they had heard of such a family? but constantly was answered, no.

Q 5

*Adrian.*

250 THE FIRE BY NIGHT.

*Adrian.*

O Heaven! take pity on me! dear papa, mamma, and Constance, where, where are you? perished doubtless!

*Godfrey.*

I've not told you all yet; but pray don't be frightened. — The worst part of the affair comes now.

*Adrian.*

What is it then? Why don't you tell me, Godfrey?

*Godfrey.*

How, in Heaven's name, would you have me tell you, if you let yourself be frightened in this manner?

*Adrian.*

Speak! pray Godfrey speak!

*Godfrey.*

Well then, the rumour was as follows: that a gentleman, a lady, and a little girl, were crushed to death, when they were just got out of doors, and thought themselves in safety.

*(Adrian swoons away.)*

*Phebe.*

Help! help! help! Come here to our assistance, some one! Adrian's dying.

*(She falls down by him.)*

*Godfrey.*

## THE FIRE BY NIGHT. 231

*Godfrey.*

But what ails him then? I said this was but a report; and then, they could not tell me who it was. It may be nothing, after all.

*Phebe.*

Why, how you talk! his fright at what you mentioned overcame him, and he quite forgot my father had preserved them.

*Godfrey* (*feeling Adrian's cheek.*)

O my poor dear little Adrian! he's as cold as any ice!

*Phebe* (*half getting up.*)

And what could bring you here? 'Tis you have killed him!

*Godfrey.*

I? — And yet I'm sure you heard me bid him not be frightened, (*he raises him a little.*) Master Adrian! (*he lets him fall again.*)

*Phebe.*

How you go to work? — Don't touch him any more. — He'll die, if he's not dead already, with such treatment! O my dear, dear brother Adrian! father, mother, Hodge? Why, where can they be got to? (*she runs in doors for help.*)

*Godfrey* (*leaning over Adrian.*)

No, no, he's not dead: he breathes a little. Were he dead, I'd go and fling myself this moment into the



252 THE FIRE BY NIGHT.

the first pond I came to. — (*He calls out.*) Adrian! Master Adrian! — If I knew but how to bring him to himself! (*he blows on Adrian's face.*) This blowing tries my lungs! — 'Twas very foolish, I must own, in me, to tell him what I did; but much more so in him to pay attention to it: and particularly when I bid him not be frightened. — Could I possibly speak plainer? — Adrian! Adrian then! — He does not hear me. — When my dear wife died, I took on very sadly for her; but to die on that account, would have been very silly! Adrian! Adrian! What had I best do? He does not seem as if he would recover. Ah, I see a pump — I'll therefore go and fill my hat with water — Half a dozen sprinklings very possibly may have a good effect upon him. (*As he's coming back to Adrian, Mr. Vernon enters, leading Mrs. Vernon in and Constance, Godfrey drops his hat, and runs away.*)

Godfrey.

Heaven forgive me! should he find him dead, I don't know what he'll do! For my part, I am dead with fear already.

Mr. Vernon.

Was not that our Godfrey? — Godfrey, what's the matter, and where's Adrian?

Mrs. Vernon.

Sure he ran away, as if afraid of meeting with us. Where can he have left him?

Constance

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*Constance* (seeing Adrian on the ground.)

What's this here? a child? (stooping down.) O  
Heaven! my brother! and he's dead!

*Mrs. Vernon* (falling down by Adrian.)

How Constance! Adrian? — Yes, indeed; help!  
help!

*Mr. Vernon.*

Was this misfortune wanting after all? (examining the body.) But he's not dead! — Thank Heaven, we're better off than that. — He breathes a little. — My dear life, (to *Mrs. Vernon*), as Adrian needs assistance, keep your strength that he may have it.

*Mrs. Vernon* (nearly swooning.)

Adrian! Adrian!

*Constance.*

Ah! my poor dear brother! Would to heaven the flames had rather took all from us! (Mr. Vernon raises Mrs. Vernon, and brings Adrian to her.)

*Mr. Vernon.*

There's no time to lose. — Have you your salts about you?

*Mrs. Vernon.*

I can't tell, I'm in so great an agitation. After so much fear and fright, here's one still greater. I would part with all that's left us for a draught of water. (Mr. Vernon sees the pump, and hastens to it.)

*Constance*

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*Constance* (feeling in her mother's pocket.)

O Here's your sal volatile, mamma. (while the salts are using.) Hear, hear, hear me, Adrian, and look up; or I shall die with grief. (He comes a little to himself) O heavens, he breathes! (She runs to her papa.) Come, come, papa; come quickly; come and see him. (Mr. Vernon brings a little water in the hollow of his hand, and throws it on his face.)

*Adrian* (fighting bitterly.)

Oh! oh! oh! Papa; papa!

*Mr. Vernon.*

He supposes I am dead: that blockhead Godfrey must have frightened him.

*Constance* (in transport.)

See! see! his eyes begin to open!

*Mr. Vernon.*

My dear fellow, don't you know us?

*Mrs. Vernon.*

Adrian! Adrian!

*Constance.*

Brother!

*Adrian* (looking round him.)

Am I dead or living? or where am I? (He sits up in Mrs. Vernon's lap.) Ah! my dear mamma!

*Mrs. Vernon.*

My child! and have we brought you back to life?

*Adrian*

## THE FIRE BY NIGHT. 255

*Adrian.* (turning to his father.)

Papa too!

*Constance* (embracing him.)

My dear Adrian! my sweet brother! I'm alive again, now you are.

*Adrian.*

O! what joy to see you thus again, dear sister! (He turns to his mother.) It was your sweet voice, mamma, that brought me back to life.

*Mr. Vernon* (to Mrs. Vernon.)

My dear, I was lamenting our misfortune just before; but now discover there was more a great deal to be lost, than goods and such things.

*Mrs. Vernon.*

Let's not think a moment more about them.

*Mr. Vernon.*

'Tis but to rejoice that in reality they are so trifling. I behold you all three safe, and can have nothing to disturb me.

*Constance.*

But what brought you, brother, into such a situation.

*Adrian.*

Would you think it? — Godfrey.

*Mr.*

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*Mr. Vernon.*

There, I said so!

*Adrian.*

Why, he told me you had all three perished in the flames.

*Constance* (looking towards the hill.)

Ah! there he is, papa; above there. (They all look up, and Godfrey draws his head in.)

*Mr. Vernon.*

Godfrey! Godfrey! — He's afraid to answer me; so call him, Adrian, you, —

*Adrian.*

Godfrey! — Don't be fearful, but come down and show yourself. — I'm living.

*Godfrey* (on the hill.)

Are you sure of that?

*Adrian.*

I think so. Did you ever hear a dead man speak?

*Godfrey* (coming down, but stopping on a sudden.)

You don't intend, I hope, sir, to discharge me. If you do, I need not be at so much trouble to come on.

*Mr. Vernon.*

See, simpleton, the consequence of speaking without thought!

*Mrs.*



## THE FIRE BY NIGHT. 257

*Mrs. Vernon.*

A little more, and you had been the death of Adrian.

*Adrian.*

Pray, mamma, forgive him! It was not his fault.

*Godfrey.*

No, certainly. I bid him not be frightened.  
(*Adrian holds out his hand.*) I'm however glad you don't intend me any harm; and for the future, I'll think no one dead, till such time as I see him ten feet under ground, and fairly buried.

### SCENE VIII.

*Adrian, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon, Constance, Meadows, Bridget, Hodge, and Phebe.*

*Meadows* (*running in*)

O the wretch! where is he?

*Phebe* (*showing Godfrey.*)

Look ye, father, here! (*Godfrey slinks behind his master.*)

*Meadows.*

Who's this? (*Phebe and Hodge run towards Adrian, who presents them both to Constance; the farmer bows to Mr. Vernon.*)

R

Mr.

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*Mr. Vernon* (raising him.)

My friend! what means this humble attitude? With such respect to bow before me! my preserver! and not only mine, but all my family's!

*Meadows.*

Yes, sir, it is another obligation you have laid upon me. I have had the opportunity of showing you my gratitude for all your favours.

*Mr. Vernon.*

You have done much more for me than ever I did yet for you, and more than I shall ever have it in my power to do.

*Meadows.*

What say you, sir? The service of a moment only. I, upon the other hand, have lived these eight years past by virtue of your bounty. You observe these fields, this farm: from you I had them. You have lost your all; permit me therefore to return them. 'Twill be happiness enough for me, that I shall always have it in my power to say, I have not been ungrateful to my benefactor.

*Mr. Vernon.*

Well then, my good friend, I do permit you to return them; but on this proviso, to enrich you with much better. You have, luckily for me, preserved my strong box that had all my writings in it,

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It, and those writings are the best part of my fortune; so that 'tis to you I owe my fortune. Having now no house in London, I'll go down into the country, whither you shall follow me, and we will fix our habitation at a seat I have in Norfolk. All your children shall be mine.

*Adrian.*

Ah! dear papa, I meant to beg as much. See, here's my sister Phebe, and here's Hodge my brother. If you knew the love and friendship they have shewn me! Possibly I might have now been dead, but for their kindness.

*Mr. Vernon* (*grasping Bridget's hand.*)

We'll be henceforth but one family; and all our happiness shall be in loving one another, like relations.

*Bridget.*

In the mean time, enter and repose yourselves. Excuse us, if we do not give you the accommodations in our cottage we could certainly have wished to do.

*Meadows* (*looking towards the hill.*)

I see my cart, fir, and a number of poor people following. Will you give me leave to go and offer them the service they are so much in need of?

*Mr. Vernon.*

I'll go with you, and console them likewise. I am too much interested in the melancholy accident

## 260 THE FIRE BY NIGHT.

that has distressed them; though a far less sufferer by it. — Less! I should have said, no sufferer, but a gainer; for the day which I conceived, at first, so miserable, gives me back much more than I have lost. It gives me, in return for such things as with money I can purchase, what is far beyond the value of all money; — a new family and friends, that shall be henceforth precious to my heart.

THE END.

HONESTY,

**HONESTY,  
THE BEST POLICY.**

**A DRAMA,  
IN TWO ACTS.**



## Persons.

*The countess of C—*

*Augustus,* } *her children.*  
*Julia,* }

*Harry,* *a nobleman's younger Son,*  
*Eliza,* *his sister.*

*Gabriel,* }  
*Lucian,* } *friends of Julia and Augustus.*  
*Flora,* }

*Rachel,* } *servants to the countess.*  
*Adam.* }

*The SCENE is in the country, at the  
Countess's, and in two rooms that  
open to the garden.*

# HONESTY, THE BEST POLICY.

A DRAMA.

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*Rachel, (reckoning up the counters on a table.)*

'T is all lost labour to stand counting thus. I can't make more than fifty-four. There should, however, be five dozen. Well, I think there never was a house like ours for hare-brain'd children; for wherever they once put their foot, one may be sure they'll jumble every thing together, if they don't lose something or another. I must look about however, or my lady, when she comes, will scold me finely. Here she is.

R 4

*The*

*The Countess, (entering.)*

You seem uneasy, Rachel! what are you in search of?

*Rachel.*

Of your ladyship's best counters.

*The Countess.*

Don't you see them on the table?

*Rachel.*

Yes, my lady; but the number is not complete.

*The Countess.*

That should not be.

*Rachel.*

That should not be, indeed; and yet there are no less than half a dozen wanting. Were there not five dozen?

*The Countess.*

Yes; you know as well as I there were.

*Rachel.*

Well then, there are but four and fifty.

*The Countess (after having counted them.)*

There are indeed no more. And yet last night the number was complete. I put them up myself, when we had finished playing. But what caused you to come now, and count them up.

*Rachel.*

Because, as I passed by the door, I saw the children had been playing with them.

*The*

*The Countess.*

Yet I absolutely ordered they should not be touched: they've ivory ones to play with: who could give them these?

*Rachel.*

Themselves.

*The Countess.*

Themselves! Where are they?

*Rachel.*

In the garden, madam, with their little company.

*The Countess.*

Fetch Julia here. — But stay, have none been here but Julia and Augustus?

*Rachel.*

Yes, their friend: And who can tell —

*The Countess.*

What Rachel? can you possibly suspect —

*Rachel.*

I'll answer for your children, please your ladyship, and likewise the three young St. Lukes, as if they were myself.

*The Countess.*

And not the others?

*Rachel.*

I don't know them well enough.

*The Countess.*

What Rachel, two such children as the little Harry and his sister?

R 5

*Rachel.*

*Rachel.*

If your ladyship thinks fit, I'll call Miss Julia in;  
but here she comes.

*The Countess, (to Julia coming in.)*

Who told you, miss, to use my silver counters?  
Did not I --

*Julia.*

'Tis not my fault, mamma.

*The Countess.*

And whose then, pray?

*Julia.*

The little Harry and his sister's. I had got the  
ivory counters, when they asked me if I meant to  
play with them, as they never had such at home,  
and must have better; upon which they opened all  
the drawers and closets till they met with these.

*The Countess.*

And why not mention I would never let you use  
them.

*Julia.*

Good! as if they'd hear me. I believe they would  
have beat us, had we not surrendered them.

*Rachel.*

Upon my word, these children, as it seems, are  
charmingly brought up.

*The Countess.*

You should at least have counted them when you  
left off playing.

*Julia.*



*Julia.*

That was what I wished to do. But after I had got to twenty - four or thereabouts, young Harry snatched them from me, put them up pell-mell, and dragged us out into the garden with him.

*The Countess.*

Don you know that six are missing?

*Julia.*

Sure, mamma!

*The Countess.*

How! sure! when I have told you? See now whether one can trust you in the least! You know it was your duty to take care of them.

*Julia.*

I was confounded, dear mamma; these children are so mischievous! I was obliged to have my eye continually on them, as I thought they would have broke your china. I was obliged frequently to follow them about the room; they may have flung the counters, then, into some corner or another.

*The Countess.*

Well, but I must have them found.

*Rachel.*

I know but one way, madam. Were I you, I'd turn the little master's pockets inside out before they left the house.

*The*

*The Countess.*

Fie, Rachel! would you have me thus affront their parents?

*Julia.*

O I'm sure, mamma, not one among them can have stole the counters.

*The Countess.*

So I think; but children of their age may be a little giddy-headed. So go to them, Julia, and politely ask if any one among them may not by mistake have put them up into his pocket. Your commission is a nice one, and requires a little management. Take care you don't offend them, by insinuating you think any one has got them.

*Julia.*

I'll take care, mamma.

*The Countess.*

Accuse yourself of negligence, and tell them I shall think you've lost the counters, if they should not soon be found.

*Julia.*

I understand you.

*The Countess.*

And bid Adam, as you pass, come here.

*Julia.*

I will, mamma.

SCENE

## SCENE II.

*Rachel and the Countess.*

*Rachel,* (who has been employed in looking round the room.)

I'll answer for it, they're not here: there's not a corner but I've searched into it.

*The Countess.*

This should not have happened in my house. I dread, yet long to know, by what means they are vanished.

*Adam* (entering)

Here I am, my lady: what's your pleasure?

*The Countess.*

To inform you, Adam, I have lost since yesterday six counters.

*Adam.*

Does your ladyship suspect I took them?

*The Countess.*

God forbid I should. I am too well acquainted with your honesty for that. But I suppose if you had crossed the room, you might have seen them on some chair or elsewhere!

*Adam.*

Counters on a chair?

*The Countess.*

I know that's not a proper place for counters; but the children have been playing where they were,  
and

and might have inconsiderately left them in some corner, and you seen them.

*Adam.*

No, my lady, I have not.

*The Countess.*

I'm sorry for it; and don't know what method to pursue. They must have certainly been lost since morning, as I counted them myself last night. — But look about.

*Rachel.*

Your ladyship has seen how I've been searching for them. Servants are but badly off, when any thing is lost about a house. However honest they may be, they're constantly suspected.

*The Countess.*

Very likely; but the honest servant will on this occasion pardon me, if I include her in my search of the dishonest.

*Adam.*

You may first of all examine me, my lady. Rogues are constantly the first to be displeased when they're suspected.

*Rachel.*

God be thanked, I have no fear of that sort; but it cannot be a matter of indifference to the honest servant, when a thief is in the house.

*The*

*The Countess.*

But put yourself into my place; what would you do? Think Adam.

*Adam.*

Do, my lady? — I've a thought this moment struck me; and provided I have leave to put it into execution, I'll engage to find the counters.

*The Countess.*

But you must not think of giving any one occasion to suppose himself suspected. — What is your design?

*Adam.*

I can't at present tell your ladyship. A single syllable might spoil the business: do but bring together all the children in the adjoining room. I promise you the thief, if there is any thief among them, shall betray himself.

*The Countess.*

I can't tell whether I should let —

*Adam.*

You know me, my dear mistress. Be assured that no one but the guilty person shall have reason to complain; and him, you, I dare believe, would not wish to spare.

*The Countess.*

Well, Adam, as I know your prudence, I rely upon it.

*Adam.*



*Adam.*

Good! my lady. Therefore I'll go get my conjuring - stick, and other matters ready. —  
(*he goes out.*)

*Rachel.*

Madam — did he not say something about conjuring? But that I myself am innocent, I should beforehand die of fright.

*The Countess.*

Peace, simpleton! What now, Augustus? (*to Augustus, who comes in*) You seem big with something or another! have you brought the counters with you?

*Augustus.*

No, mamma: I have but learned that six are lost. My sister told us so just this moment.

*The Countess.*

And how was the intelligence received?

*Augustus.*

We were exceedingly surprized. The two St. Lukes particularly, and their sister, want to come and plead their innocence before you.

*The Countess.*

Plead! they are the last I should suspect of such a deed. And Master Harry?

*Augustus.*

*Augustus.*

O, he's furious; and told Julia, that to look upon him as a thief, was but a bad reception.

*The Countess.*

Julia was not rude, I hope, in telling them my message.

*Augustus.*

No, mamma, quite otherwise. She spoke with great politeness.

*The Countess.*

Why then, pray, was Harry angry? there was nothing personal in what your sister said.

*Augustus.*

I can't well tell the reason; but Eliza drew him privately aside: he would not condescend to hear her. He's determined to be gone: his hat is fortunately here; he'll come and fetch it, and declares he'll not remain a minute in the house. He threatens he'll complain to his papa.

*The Countess.*

He must not positively go. I'll tell his lordship of the whole affair myself, when he comes to take him home.

*Augustus.*

The rest wish greatly for permission to appear and justify themselves before you.

S

*The*

## HONESTY THE

*The Countess.*

There's no need of that. I only wished to know if they could give me any information of the counters. They are all of them too well brought up, that I should venture to accuse them of a theft. But I am well acquainted with the whims of children. They'll see every thing, and finger every thing; and from a want of thought, might easily have put a thing into their pocket, without any criminal intention.

*Augustus.*

Certainly they might, mamma; as I did, you remember, when I took my sister's purse up by mistake, and would have carried it away.

*The Countess.*

But softly; here they are. — Go Rachel, and enquire if Adam is preparing matters.

(*Rachel goes out.*)

## SCENE III.

*The Countess, Augustus, Julia, Harry, Eliza, Gabriel, Lucian, and Flora.*

*The Countess.*

Well, how fares it with you all, my little friends? I'm glad to see you here.

*Harry.*

*Harry,*

Miss Julia has just now informed us, you have lost six counters of the number we unluckily were playing with. I'm sorry for it; but could never think your ladyship would have suspected any one of us had taken them. At least I can assure you for my sister and myself, that we know nothing of them.

*The Countess.*

God forbid I should suspect such wellbred children, as I look upon you all to be. Sure Julia did not tell you I supposed you had the counters.

*Eliza.*

No, my lady; all she said, was to enquire if we had brought them out through inattention, or to play a little longer with them in the garden.

*The Countess.*

Which you might have very innocently done. 'Tis she alone I blame in the affair, because she did not let you have her counters.

*Gabriel.*

She designed, I think, to use them.

*Lucian.*

I never dare to shew my face again, if I had taken nothing but a pin.

*Flora, (emptying her pockets.)*

See, my lady, I have nothing.

*The Countess.*

My dear children, I've already told you I am far from thinking any of you has them, when you say you have not. They are certainly of no great value; yet I cannot but confess their loss affects me.

*Harry.*

Were they only worth a straw, they are your ladyship's, and should not now be missing. But you know there are such things as servants; and they are not always very honest. 'Tis not the first time we have suspected them at home.

*Julia.*

But 'tis the first time any thing of the kind has happened in our house, dear master Harry, I assure you.

*Augustus.*

I would answer for our servants, men and women.

*The Countess.*

I have trusted them this long time; but if you, sir, (to Harry) have made any observations, I request you'd let me know them.

*Harry.*

Oh, no no! — but when we went into the garden, did not what's her name — the house-maid enter?

*The*



*The Countess.*

Rachel! Oh, I don't fear her. These six years past that I have had her, she might easily have made away with things of value, had she been dishonest.

*Harry.*

Did not your old footman come in likewise? I don't like his looks; and should not chuse to meet him in a lane at night.

*The Countess.*

Fie, sir! what makes you thus suspect the honest Adam? He was my father-in-law's confidential servant, and has been much longer in the family than even I myself. If he could possibly turn pilferer, neither you nor I could know what living creature we might trust.

*Harry.*

'Tis not unlikely then, but some one may have got into the room when we were gone.

*The Countess.*

That's not at all unlikely; and I'm going to enquire. Amuse yourselves till I come back.

*Harry.*

No, madam; after what has passed, I can't stay any longer here. Augustus, can you tell me where they've put my hat?

*Augustus.*

'Tis taken to be brushed; you'll have it brought you.

*Harry.*

I must have it instantly.

*Eliza.*

But won't you stay a little for papa? You know he means to come and fetch us.

*The Countess.*

I can't let you possibly go home on foot. You would have upwards of three miles to walk. Stay here till I return: I won't detain you long.  
(*She goes out.*)

*Harry.*

I'm very much astonished your mamma should have such thoughts of us! We steal her counters!

*Julia.*

Neither has she such a thought. She might have fancied we had put them, without thought, into our pockets. I might easily have taken them in this way, as yourself, or any other: But as you say steal, she did not think of such a word, or any like it.

*Harry.*

Had there been none here but tradesmen's children, she might well have entertained suspicions; but should make some difference now.

*Gabriel.*

*Gabriel.*

You speak of us, sir, I can see. Your looks inform me so: but let me tell you, in my turn, that 'tis one's way of living, and not birth, one should be proud of.

*Harry.*

How these tradesmen talk about their way of living! You are very happy there are so few children here about, and that Augustus and myself are forced to make you our companions, or have no diversion. Did you live in London, you would not have such an honour, notwithstanding your fine way of living.

*Augustus.*

Speak, sir, for yourself alone: for just as here, in London too, I should be proud to entertain my little friends.

*Julia.*

Yes, certainly. They give us, to the full, as good examples as such whipper-snapper noblemen as you.

*Eliza.*

This, brother, you've deserved. Why first attack them?

*Harry.*

And you, too, upon me? You think certainly as I do, though you won't confess you do. Have you forgot mamma's instruction on the subject of familiarity with those beneath us? "Never mix with tradesmen's

definen's children: in the lower ranks of life you'll always have low thoughts."

*Augustus.*

And can you possibly suspect my friends are capable of being thieves?

*Gabriel.*

Did we approach the table?

*Flora.*

No: whereas we saw you take the counters, and look at them half a dozen times, I fancy. (*Harry aims to strike her.*)

*Augustus.*

Softly! You'll have me to deal with else.

*Gabriel.*

No, no, my friend. I thank you, but I can take care of my sister. Let him even threaten her. I'm not a bit more frightened at his size than title.

*Harry.*

O 'tis far beneath me to dispute with traders.

*Julia.*

Very well: I hope then it is beneath you likewise to attack a little girl.

*Harry.*

I shan't permit her to insult me.

*Eliza.*

She would certainly have done much better, had she held her tongue,

*Julia.*

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*Julia.*

But being such a child, she might be pardoned;  
and particularly when she spoke the truth.

*Harry.*

The truth?

*Gabriel.*

Yes, if you understand that word. — She said you  
took the counters and looked at them; and this  
certainly was true.

*Harry.*

I shan't even condescend to answer.

*Gabriel.*

You can't take a better resolution, when you've  
nothing but such answers for us.

### SCENE IV.

*Augustus, Julia, Harry, Eliza, Gabriel,  
Lucian, Flora, and the Countesss.*

*The Countesss.*

What's the meaning of all this? I won't have any  
quarrels here.

*Harry.*

My lady, I expect you'll do me justice on these  
little folks.

*The Countesss.*

Folks! folks! and who are those? I'm not accu-  
stomed to have such as visit here called so.



*Augustus.*

He's angry, since we were not in a humour to endure his airs.

*Julia.*

He thought he should have had a company of dukes at least to play with.

*Gabriel.*

And imagines we should be suspected of this theft, much rather than a nobleman.

*Lucian.*

As if we had no character to keep, as he has!

*Flora.*

Ay, and would have beat me, had not Gabriel taught him better.

*The Countess.*

But it can't be true; however, let us withdraw into the adjoining chamber; Adam will be with you there: his scheme, at least, will certainly divert us; for as to any way he has of coming at the truth, respecting things that have been lost, I laugh'd at such pretensions. Yet if any of you present should refuse his company, it could not but be looked upon as very strange; and who can tell, if he or she would not, on that account, incur suspicion? But I make the affair too serious. — Go in, my good friends; I wish the whole were over. — As I said just now, 'twill make you laugh; and you'll be reconciled with one another.

ACT II.

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

*The Countess, Augustus, Julia, Harry,  
Eliza, Gabriel, Lucian, and Flora.*

*Eliza.*

To say the truth, my brother is too hasty.

*The Countess.*

He will mend that fault, I dare persuade myself,  
in future: but here's Adam. (*Adam enters with a  
basket.*)

*Adam.*

So; 'tis here your ladyship sees company: well  
then, with your permission, and the little gentle-  
folks, I'll introduce my cock; who, you must know  
before hand, is a conjurer. (*Putting down the basket  
on the table.*)

*Flora.*

O, a cock! a cock!

*Adam.*

Yes, nothing more; for look you: (*He lifts up a  
napkin in the basket, so that Flora and the rest discern  
the creature's neck and crest.*) Just like others, saving  
that my cock has not his equal in the world for  
knowledge: why, he'll tell me things no other per-  
son possibly can know of. If a single straw, and  
nothing else is missing, I need only run and have a  
consul-

consultation with him; he'll be sure to know who stole it.

*Julia.*

You can then find out our counters can you?

*Adam.*

Can I? Why last Christmas, at the ale-house, I had lost my pipe; so what does I do, but, away and fetch my cock, who let me know the groom had got it: and I think you recollect he broke his leg about a fortnight after.

*Flora.*

He can talk then?

*Adam.*

Yes, like other cocks: Cock, cock-a--raw. — On which, I understand him just as if 'twere you spoke to me.

*Julia.*

Yet you never told us this before,

*Adam.*

Because we never yet lost any thing.

*The Countess.*

Well now, a truce to all this conversation, and begin.

*Adam.*

Not quite so fast, my lady. I must go to conjuring in the dark.

*The*

*The Countess.*

A very easy matter; you need only close the shutters.

*Julia.*

I'll go out and push them to,

*The Countess.*

You're much too short: you cannot reach them; Adam will do that himself.

*Adam.*

Yes, madam. *(He goes out.)*

*Augustus.*

*(With the rest, excepting Harry, who appears embarrassed, lifting up the napkin.)* This same cock seems supernatural, I fancy. *(Looking at him earnestly.)* How his eyes shine!

*Julia.*

And his comb, how red it looks! my patience! how it shakes upon his head!

*Flora.*

Do you imagine it has so much knowledge, then, as Adam says?

*Lucian.*

Papa has often told us, what we ought to think of such strange stories.

*Gabriel.*

Adam is a cunning sportsman, and I'm sure can make birds hold their tongue, much rather with his piece,

piece, than teach a cock to talk by virtue of his wand.

*Eliza.*

Who knows! my 'governess has told me many wondrous things of conjuration, and all that.

*Harry.*

I wonder, sister, you can listen to such stories!

*The Countess.*

I am glad you have these notions of the matter, and should like to laugh at Adam for his folly. What simplicity! a cock discover thieves!

*Harry (forcing a smile.)*

I fancy we shall have a deal of laughing very shortly. (*The shutters come together.*) But why put the shutters to? (*with uneasiness.*) I don't love darkness.

*Julia.*

If the cock can't see, he'll never find the thief out. — Will he, pray mamma?

*The Countess.*

Well asked: for I can't tell you.

*Flora.*

I should like, if I knew how, to make him speak. Come pretty little cock, say something. — See how dark it is. — Look out a little. — He don't speak a word!

*Julia.*



*Julia.*

The reason is, I fancy, he'll obey his master only.

(*Adam comes in again.*)

*The Countess.*

Well, you're satisfied now, Adam, since you've thus shut out the day-light?

*Adam.*

Yes, my lady; every thing is as it should be. And so now, let those remain that have not stole the counters, but if any one is guilty, let that one go out. — What all remain.

*Harry.*

How cunning!

*Adam.*

I see clearly then I must employ my art. (*He waves his wand, and draws a circle on the floor; pronouncing something unintelligible.*)

That's well! So now, my cock, take heed;

And tell us, who are rogues indeed.

Come now my little gentlemen and ladies, and let every one of you, in turn, lift up the napkin here, and with his right hand, do you see, stroke Chanticleer upon the back. You'll hear his music, when the thief once puts his hand upon him: but don't lift the cloth too high; just high enough to let your hand pass under it.

So

So now, my pretty cock, take heed;  
 And tell us who are rogues indeed.  
 Well! what will none of you begin?

*The Countess.*

What, every one afraid? Why, one would think  
 you all, at this rate, guilty!

*Flora.*

I'm the youngest, but I'll set the example. (*She  
 lifts up the cloth, and strokes the cock twice over in the  
 basket.*) Do you see, the cock don't speak. It is  
 not I then that have stoln the counters.

*Adam.*

Very well. Stand now in this place, with your  
 hand behind you. — Is it so?

*Flora.*

Feel, feel.

*Adam.*

That's right. Now you, sir. (*To Augustus.*)

*Augustus.*

O! I fear as little as Miss Flora, — There. — He  
 has not spoke. — Must I too hold my hand be-  
 hind me?

*Adam.*

Certainly; and every one. — Come here, by this  
 young lady. — Well, another.

*Julia.*

I'll go next. — (*She strokes him.*) If he had said  
 a word, he would have been a story-teller. —

*Adam.*

*Adam.*

By your brother here. Who's next?

*Eliza.*

'Tis my turn now. (*She strokes him*) As mate as any mackarel — yet I stroked him four times over.

*Adam.*

Are your right hands all behind you? Don't forget that part.

*Gabriel* (*to Harry.*)

I'll follow you.

*Harry.*

As if I'd have to do with such child's play!

*The Countess.*

You would not surely spoil our sport. A little complaisance, pray, Harry.

*Harry.*

If that's all, I've no objection. — (*He puts his hand under the cloth.*) There. — I don't find he has spoke for me, though I have stroked him more than others.

*Adam.*

Here, fir, with the rest; and keep your hand behind you.

*Flora.*

There are none now, but my brothers left, that have not stroked him. It is one of them! — O, no; I don't think so. (*Gabriel and Lucian imitate the others; upon which, the children all burst a laughing.*)

T

*Lucian.*

*Lucian.*

And where's the thief? — Why no-where.

*The Countess.*

Adam, you should send your cock to Norwood; he's not deep enough.

*Adam.*

I must acknowledge this confounds me. — For a little while, however, patience; and don't stir. — Stand still, I say. — They're just like so much quick silver! — My circle, as I think, must be imperfect. I'll go fetch a candle, and examine. Pray your ladyship, let no one quit his place.

## SCENE II.

*The Countess, Augustus, Julia, Harry, Eliza, Gabriel, Lucian, and Flora.*

*Harry.*

I knew before-hand, what all this would come to. — Stupid nonsense!

*Flora.*

Why, this cock's no wiser than his master.

*Eliza.*

Truly, I am glad he's caught.

*Julia.*

And what does he design to do, when he has got his light?

*The*

*The Countess.*

He 'll shew us.

*Flora.*

I should like to see the cock now. — He'll scarce hold his head up, I suppose, for shame.

*Adam.* (returning with a light, and going up to Flora.)

Come, let me see your little hand. (She holds him out the left.) Not this, — but that behind you. Good;

*Flora.* (looking at her hand, and crying out.)

O! what a hand I have! as black as any coal! And will it always be so?

*Adam.*

Don't be frightened, little miss! I'll speak about it to my cock, and you shall have both hands as white as snow. — (The children have not patience, but look all together at their hands, and instantly cry out at once.)

*Augustus.*

How black my fingers are too!

*Julia.*

And mine likewise! What does Adam mean by this?

*Eliza.*

I'd twist the creature's neck off, if I had him.

*Gabriel.*

Fegs! my wristbands are come in a little for it!



*Lucian.*

'Tis as if my hand were painted!

*Harry* (*lifting up his hand in triumph.*)

But see mine! There's none; but I have got a hand that's fit to look at.

*Adam* (*taking hold of Harry by the collar.*)

Very likely! 'Tis then you have stolen the counters. — Give them up, young gentleman, this instant, or I'll search your pockets, and then blacken you all over!

*Eliza.*

Blacken him? O, brother! if you've got the counters, give them up this moment.

*The Countess.*

Take care, Adam, what you say!

*Adam.*

I'm sure he has them. So, quit the counters or expect to have a countenance as grimy as the blackest negro's.

*Harry* (*turning pale and trembling.*)

Is it possible I should have put them in my pocket, and not thought of what I was about? (*He feels about him.*) I recollect, indeed, I had them in my hand. (*He seems surprized at finding them thrust down into a corner of his waistcoat pocket.* Dear me! they're here indeed! Who would have thought it?

it? (*All the children look at one another with surprise, while Harry stands confounded.*)

*The Countess.*

Adam! (*he approaches*) take away your cock and candle, and go open us the shutters. Take care, (*in a whisper.*) and don't tell your fellow-servants how you found the counters. Say they were thrust a great way back into the table-drawer.

*Adam.*

I will, my lady. (*He goes out.*)

*The Countess.*

Go, my little friends, into the other room: you'll find I've ordered water there to wash your hands. Take care, and don't splash one another's clothes.

*Flora.*

No, no:— but if this black should not come off?

*The Countess.*

'Tis nothing but a little ivory black, and water will remove it. You, sir, (*to Harry.*) as your hands are clean, may stay with me.

### SCENE III.

*The Countess, Harry.*

*The Countess.*

Well then, my haughty little gentleman! and is it possible you could be guilty of so scandalous an

action? you, that scarce a quarter of an hour ago looked down with so much scorn upon the children of a reputable worthy tradesman, and supposed your quality disgraced by being in their company. They have at present their revenge, since they may call you, and with justice, a vile thief!

*Harry.*

Pray pardon me, my lady! — I was playing with the counters — and without considering at the moment, must have put them into my pocket. — I have no other method of accounting for their being found upon me.

*The Countess.*

Pitiful excuse! that aggravates your fault! At such a tender age as your's, could I have possibly imagined one with so much front?

*Harry.*

Believe me, madam, I had certainly no bad design! — I took them without meaning so to do, and afterwards concealed the matter, from my dread of being looked on as a thief.

*The Countess.*

But after I had bid my daughter make enquiry for them with such delicacy, you might easily have seemed to search your pockets, and restored them without blushing. Your proceeding would have then been looked upon as nothing but an inadvertency.

*Harry.*

*Harry.*

I did not think of that, my lady.

*The Countess.*

What then did you think of, when you durst drop hints that possibly my honest servants might have taken them? or that my children's little friends were objects of suspicion? What were your ideas, when you made believe to stroke the cock?

*Harry.*

But, madam, I did stroke him.

*The Countess.*

Hold your tongue, you little rascal! — for that name is not too bad for your deservings. Happily, as yet, you have not got sufficient cunning to conceal your wicked actions. You did stroke the cock! Is that then your assertion? Don't you see, that if you had you would have blacked your hands, as all the others, Adam having smeared him over with a certain composition? Your companions were not in the least afraid to stroke him, as their conscience did not any way reproach them for the theft; but as for you, the apprehension you were under that the servant's artifice might really be conjuration awed you, and the means you pitched on to avoid detection have betrayed you. Oh! how politic you thought yourself, I warrant, in pretending only, as you did, to stroke the cock: but honesty you would have

found much better policy. You merit I should tell my lord, your father, of your laudable behaviour, when he comes to fetch you.

*Harry* (falling on his knees.)

Oh, no! Pray, my lady, I beseech you! He would beat me; he would tread me under foot.

*The Countess.*

And 'twould be better he should do so, than bring up a monster to disgrace him at some future period. For of what here after will you not be capable, since in the season of your infancy, as I may call it, you can perpetrate so great a crime?

*Harry.*

Ah! madam, pardon me for pity's sake, and never —

*The Countess.*

Doubtless you have often made these promises to others; for this hardly is your first transgression. Every circumstance confirms it. So much falsity and impudence —

*Harry.*

Then hear me, my good lady! If you ever hear in future, that I make free with any thing whatever that's not mine —

*The Countess.*

Inform me, in the first place, what did you intend to do with these six counters? You could

hardly



hardly think you would have any opportunity of using them, but they must instantly be known. You meant to sell them, then, for money?

*Harry.*

No, believe me! I was pleased with looking at them. I considered no one would remember having seen them elsewhere, and on that account secured them, my lady.

*The Countess.*

And how could you desire to have another's property? Confess! Is this your first offence?

*Harry (hiding his face.)*

No, no indeed, my lady. I have often been a thief at home; but never having been suspected there, supposed I should have had the same good fortune here.

*The Countess.*

A very wicked sort of reasoning this! For, granting no one upon earth suspected you, I'm certain you well know God sees and punishes whatever people do amiss. Perhaps, however, this event is for your benefit; and you will prove more likely to amend, when you have once been punished as you merit.

*Harry.*

Let it be by you, my lady, or by any one, but not by my papa. Let him know nothing of the

matter, I conjure you. Tell it, if you please, to my mamma, but keep the matter from his knowledge.

*The Countess.*

There again! you would not have your father know it, as you fear the blows he might bestow upon you. Thus 'tis nothing but an abjectness that guides you, even in the work of your repentance; and it is not for his peace of mind you would conceal it from him, for you fear not your mamma should know it, since she would not beat you. 'Tis not your idea to consult her peace of mind.

*Harry.*

Then tell it my preceptor.

*The Countess.*

I am sensible, indeed, how much the knowledge of your fault would mortally afflict them; and from that consideration, not upon your own account, consent to spare you; but on this condition, that you come with your preceptor hither, and before him let me have your solemn promise of amendment. I will get him to keep watch upon your conduct; but if ever you should break your word, not only will I mention this adventure of the counters to his lordship, but let every body know it.

*Harry.*

I consent you should do so, my lady.

*The*

*The Countess.*

You might think that, after this, I should forbid your company with Julia and Augustus; but I have at heart your reformation, and will judge there of myself. You may continue therefore coming here.

*Harry.*

I thank you — yes sincerely; but how face your servants?

*The Countess.*

You have nothing upon that account to fear, for I have had more care and forethought for your reputation than yourself, by telling Adam not to speak about it in the kitchen; and to hide your lie, have been compelled to one myself, that they might not suppose you guilty.

*Harry.*

Ah! my lady, how much am I not indebted to your bounty! Never shall I, if I would, forget the service you have done me. But your children? — and the little company now with them?

*The Countess.*

I am well acquainted with their goodness, and am sure they will forgive you. Call them.  
(*Harry with a down cast look, goes slowly towards the door, and bids them enter.*)

## SCENE IV.

*The Countess, Harry, Augustus, Julia,  
Eliza, Gabriel, Lucian, and Flora.*

*Eliza.*

Go, sir, you're a thief! I'll never call you brother for the future.

*The Countess.*

No, my dear Eliza, he is not so guilty as you think him. He has told me every thing. It was to play a little with the counters out of doors he took them; but when once the matter seemed considered as a theft, he was terrified at the idea of incurring my suspicion. This apparent guilt has sprung from a mistaken shame, which I am very willing to excuse; but not (*looking at the St. Lukes*) his scandalous endeavours to make you, my little dears, seem guilty.

*Gabriel.*

Oh! my lady, we don't wish him any harm at present for it, as we know we should forgive even such as wrong us, and particularly when we see they are unhappy.

*The Countess.*

Do you mark that, Harry? Such a conduct ought to shew you how much nobler 'tis to have an elevated way of thinking, than to boast an elevated birth.

birth. You find yourself entirely at the mercy even of those you have insulted; and, with all the boast of your nobility, you are the object of their pity.

*Harry.*

Oh, what shame! but I submit to undergo it.

*Gabriel.*

We will never introduce again the mention of this matter. It shall be a secret for the time to come between us; shan't it, brother?

*Lucian.*

Yes, he may rely upon my silence.

*Gabriel.*

And you, sister?

*Flora.*

I'll not have him beat. I know what pain it gives one. (*Harry in the transports of his gratitude, embraces them.*)

*Harry.*

I desire, but dare not ask, to be acquainted with you for the future.

*Gabriel.*

'Twill be doing us an honour, if you'll still continue upon terms of friendship with us.

*Augustus and Julia.*

And for our part, we shall be no less delighted with your company, as long as you regard our friends,

*Eliza.*



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*Eliza.*

You're all of you too good. He does not merit such indulgence, and papa must be informed of every thing.

*The Countess.*

You'd lose my friendship and esteem entirely, I must tell you, Miss Eliza, could you possibly be unaffected with your brother's laudable repentance, when even strangers overlook his error. Don't employ the advantage his offence affords you, to undo him in his parents good opinion; but, in future, let your counsel shew him how to act, that he may merit their affection. I dare answer, you need never be ashamed of any thing he does hereafter.

*Harry.*

I should be unworthy of such bounty, if this lesson could be blotted out from my remembrance.

*Flora.*

Take due care it be not, or Beware of the cock in future!

THE END.

A  
GOOD HEART  
COMPENSATES FOR  
MANY INDISCRETIONS,  
A DRAMA,  
IN ONE ACT.

*Persons.*

*Mr. Vaughan.*

*Mary Anne, his Daughter.*

*Frederick, his Nephew.*

*Dorothea, his Niece.*

*Servant.*

*Peter, an old Coachman.*

*SCENE, An apartment in Mr. Vaughan's  
Country - House.*

SCENE II.

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A GOOD  
HEART COMPENSATES  
FOR MANY INDISCRETIONS,  
A DRAMA.

---

SCENE I.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

**T**his is what one gains by taking charge of other people's children! This Frederick, how I loved him! he was, I believe, dearer to me than my own son, and the scape-grace now plays these pranks! How could he change so far from what he promised in his infancy! Such goodness of heart, such spirit, such cheerfulness! The courage of a lion, and the mildness of a lamb! One could not help loving him. But let him never appear before me again. I will never even hear him mentioned.

U

SCENE

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SCENE II.

*Mr. Vaughan, Dorothea.*

*Dorothea.*

Did you send for me, uncle? What are your commands?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

I have fine news for you, concerning your rogue of a brother.

*Dorothea (turning pale.)*  
Concerning Frederick?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

There, read that letter from Richard, or I will read it to you myself. (*reads.*)

*"Dear Papa,*

"I am sorry to have none but disagreeable news for you; however it is better that you should receive them from me, than from another. Our dear Frederick" — Oh! yes. He deserves that affectionate name now. — "Our dear Frederick goes on very indifferently. He sold his watch some days ago, and what is still worse, the greatest part of his school books and books of devotion. I will tell you how I came to know it. At a standing of second-hand books, I asked the other day by change for the *Whole Duty of Man*; for as I had worn mine out by dint of reading it, I thought I could not do better than to buy another. The bookseller  
shewed



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shewed me one, which I knew immediately to be Frederick's. I was positive of it, as his name was upon the title page. I bought it for six pence, but did not say a word about it, for fear of prejudicing our school-fellows against him. I contended myself with shewing it to the head master, who sent for the bookseller, and asked him from whom he had that book. The bookseller confessed that he had bought it from my cousin, and Frederick could not deny it, but said, that he had sold it because he wanted money; and that meantime, until he should be able to buy another, he had borrowed one from a friend who had two. The head master would know what he had done with this money, and Frederick told him, though I suspect his account to be all a fib. Oh! thought I to myself, we must find if he has not parted with some of his necessities too. I thought first of the watch that you gave him for his new-year's gift, to let him see how his time went, which was a matter that he minded very little, as you may remember. I asked him what o' clock it was. He seemed confused, and told me that his watch was at the watch-maker's. I went thither that moment, in order to be certain. There was not a word of truth in it. I expostulated with him, as an affectionate cousin ought; but he answered me that it was no concern of mine, and that his watch was much better as he had dis-

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posed of it, than in his fob, as he had no longer occasion to know the hour, for his business. Who knows what he may have done worse? for one cannot guess the whole." — Well what do you say to this, Dorothy?

*Dorothea.*

Dear uncle, I own that I am as much displeased at my brother as you are. Notwithstanding —

*Mr. Vaughan.*

A little patience! This is not all. The best of the story is to come. (*reads.*)

"Only hear what he has done since." The day before yesterday he went out in the afternoon without leave. Evening came on; he did not return. Supper bell rang; he was not to be found. In short, he staid out the whole night, and did not come in until the next morning. You may imagine how he was received. They asked him where he had been; but he had invented all his stories beforehand. And even, though all that he said were true — however, he is to appear this evening before all the masters; and if they do him justice, he will be expelled shamefully, or at least sent home. What afflicts me most is his ingratitude for all your kindnesses, the disgrace that he brings on us, and the irregular way of life that he follows. I cannot believe that he told truth, in speaking of the place where

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where he spent the night." And why do not you mention it? "But I wish that he may. It would be still worse, and he would only be the more worthy of your resentment. He threatens now, to run away, and go home." Yes, yes, let him come! let him only put his foot upon my threshold; he will see the consequence. Let him go where he spends his nights. As for you, Dorothea, I desire you never to speak a word to me in his favour. They may put him in prison, send him home, expel him ignominiously; it is all equal to me. I shall never concern myself about him. He may go to some sea-port and ship himself as cabin-boy for the West Indies. I have used him as my son too long.

*Dorothea.*

True, my dear uncle, you have been as a father to us, and even our own parents could not have shewn more care and kindness to us.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

I have done it with pleasure, and take no merit to myself for it. Your mother, while I was abroad on my travels, did the same for my children. So it became my duty, and I never to this day declined it: but —

*Dorothea.*

Ah! if my brother has forgot himself for a moment, it is owing only to his impetuous temper.

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You have had him long under your eye, Whenever he had done a fault, his repentance and sorrow for having offended you, always exceeded the offence.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Well, and how many indiscretions have I pardoned him? When he burned his eye-brows and hair with his fire-works; when he threw a stone through one of our neighbours windows, and broke a large looking-glass; when he fell into the mire, and spoiled a new suit of clothes; when he overturned the handsomest carriage that I ever had; did not I forgive him all this? I attributed these mischievous freaks to a petulance that did not however as yet shew a bad disposition: but to sell his watch and his books, to leave his school a-nights and lye out, to fly against his masters, and still to have the face to think of coming home to me!

*Dorothea.*

My dear uncle, be pleased first to hear what he can say in his justification.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Hear him? Heaven forbid that I should even see him. I shall tell all my tenants to receive him with a good stick, if he offers to come amongst them.

*Dorothea.*

Ah! no. Your heart could never consent to such harshness. You will not deny the request of a niece that loves and honours you as her father.

*Mr.*

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*Mr. Vaughan.*

You shall see whether that will be difficult to me.

*Dorothea.*

Will you have me think then, that you no longer love the memory of your sister; that you no longer love me?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

You? I have no fault to find with you, and therefore your brother's misbehaviour shall never change my sentiments as to you. But if you love me, do not tease me with any more solicitations. Study only to live happy in my friendship.

*Dorothea.*

How can I live happy, while I see my brother in disgrace with you?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

He has deserved it but too well. Why not tell what he did with the money, and where he lay out?

*Dorothea.*

It appears from the letter, that he confessed both. It is only Richard that will not believe him. *(Looks at Mr. Vaughan with the tears in her eyes.)*  
Ah! dear uncle --

*Mr. Vaughan (a little softened.)*

Well. He shall have one chance more, on your account. I will wait for the head master's letter.



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SCENE III.

*Mr. Vaughan, Dorothea, Servant.*

*Mr. Vaughan.*

What do you want?

*Servant.*

A messenger, sir, would speak with you.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

What has he brought?

*Servant.*

A letter from the school, (*gives him the letter.*)

*Mr. Vaughan* (*looking at the superscription.*)

Right. I was waiting for this. It comes from the head master. I know his hand. Where is the messenger? Let him wait for my answer.

*Servant.*

Shall I shew him up?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

No; I will go down. I wish to inform myself from his own mouth. (*Goes out. Dorothea following him, the Servant makes signs to her to stop.*)

SCENE

SCENE IV.

*Dorothea, Servant.*

*Servant.*

Harkye, Miss Dorothea, come here!

*Dorothea.*

What have you to say?

*Servant.*

Master Frederick is here.

*Dorothea.*

My brother?

*Servant.*

If he be not come yet, he is not far off.

*Dorothea.*

Who told you so?

*Servant.*

The messenger that overtook him on the road  
Ah! Miss, what has Master Frederick done?

*Dorothea.*

Nothing unworthy. Do not believe him capable  
of it.

*Servant.*

Ah! I never thought so of him. Heaven knows  
we all loved him, and would have given our lives  
for him. He satisfied us for the least service that  
we could do him. He spoke for us to your uncle,  
whenever he was in a passion with us; and he  
was a friend to all the poor people in the

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neighbourhood. I wonder how his schoolmaster could be angry with him. Ah! I see how it is. They were going to punish him for some arch prank, and he, being a fine spirited young gentleman, would not be used so roughly.

*Dorothea.*

Where did the messenger find him?

*Servant.*

About a stage off. He was sleeping under a willow on the bank of a little stream.

*Dorothea.*

My poor brother!

*Servant.*

The man stopped till he awoke. You must think how surprized Master Frederick was on seeing him. He imagined that this man had been sent after him to bring him back; and he told him that he would sooner be torn in pieces than go with him.

*Dorothea.*

Ah! I know his stout resolute way.

*Servant.*

The messenger protested to him that, (he had such a regard for him,) if he were sure to be scolded, or even to lose his place for it, he would not molest him. He then told him his message, and how they spoke of him at school.

*Dorothea.*

And what did my brother resolve to do?

*Servant.*

*Servant.*

Although he was spent with fatigue, he walked on by the messenger's side, and they came together as far as the edge of our grove. Master Frederick struck in there, to go and hide himself in the grotto, and there he will stay for the messenger's return, to know how your uncle will take matters.

*Dorothea.*

Oh! if I could speak to him!

*Servant.*

It is likely that he wishes it as much as you.

*Dorothea.*

My uncle often walks that way. If he should meet him in the first of his passion! Oh! be so kind as to run and tell him to hide himself in the barn, behind the trusses of hay. I will go to him as soon as my uncle walks out.

*Servant.*

Never fear, miss. I will bring him there myself, and help him to hide himself.

*(Goes out.)*

## SCENE V.

*Dorothea (alone.)*

What troubles he continually causes to me! Yet I cannot help loving him.

SCENE

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SCENE VI.

*Dorothea, Mary Anne.*

*Dorothea.*

Ah! dear cousin, how I did long to speak with you! and yet, alas! I have but very ill news for you.

*Mary Anne.*

I know the whole. My papa just now gave me my brother's letter to read. That from the school-matter has redoubled his anger against Frederick.

*Dorothea.*

I do not know how to go about justifying him.

*Mary Anne.*

I would wager that he is innocent. Do you know Richard's hypocrisy! He does all the faults, and is cunning enough to lay the blame of them upon others. This is not the first instance of his striving to hurt your brother in my papa's opinion. Twenty times has he, by underhand complaints, had him almost turned out of the house; and then, when matters have been cleared up, he himself has been found the only person in fault. I see, even from his letter, that he is a pickthank, and that Frederick, at worst, has been only imprudent.

*Dorothea.*



*Dorothea.*

What comfort your kindness affords me! Yes, my brother is naturally well inclined, free, sincere, generous, unsuspecting; but he is also petulant, daring and inconsiderate. He is headstrong in his resolutions, and loses respect for those that do not treat him according to his humour.

*Mary Anne.*

And Richard is envious, dissembling, hypocritical, and fawning. Like a cat that gives at first a paw soft as velvet, and afterwards strikes you with her talons at the moment when you depend most on her kindness. How willingly would I give my brother, with all his false virtues, for yours, "with all his imperfections on his head." The worst is, that Frederick is not here.

*Dorothea.*

And if he was?

*Mary Anne.*

Eh! where is he then? Let me run to him. I long to see him.

*Dorothea.*

Hist! I think I hear my uncle talking to himself.

*Mary Anne.*

Well, you are Frederick's sister; it is but right that you should see him first. I will stay here with my papa, and try to soften him. Do you run to

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to the poor wanderer, and give him some words of comfort and hope.

*Dorothea.*

Yes, and a good lecture besides, I assure you, for he deserves it at all events.

*(Goes out)*

SCENE VII.

*Mr. Vaughan, Mary Anne.*

*Mr. Vaughan.*

I am so provoked with this boy, that I have not been able to write, to send back the messenger. However, he may stay here till to-morrow morning. Let me compose myself a little.

*Mary Anne.*

How, papa! are you still angry with my poor cousin? Is his crime so very great then?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Truly it becomes you much to excuse him. I see that your head is no better than his, and you would have done worse, perhaps, in his place. Yet you have both of you a good example before you.

*Mary Anne.*

Who is that?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

My good boy Richard.

*Mary*

*Mary Anne.*

Oh! yes. My brother is a boy of great veracity, indeed, very generous! he is a pretty pattern!

*Mr. Vaughan.*

I know that Dolly and you are no friends to him. I myself, from your opinions of him, had conceived a prejudice against him; but his master gives me such a good account of him to-day —

*Mary Anne.*

Nay, did not all his masters quite sicken you with his praises here? They knew his father's fortune, and people always hope to wheedle presents from a father, by flattering him concerning his son.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

I grant, they may have flattered me a little with regard to him, however, from his earliest childhood he has never played me a single prank of the thousands that Frederick has.

*Mary Anne.*

His pranks never hurted any body but himself.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

You would make one mad. Did he hurt nobody but himself, when he overturned my chariot? a carriage elegantly gilt, and quite new, that had just cost me two hundred pounds!

*Mary*

*Mary Anne.*

It was but an accident; imprudence is pardonable at his age. Peter was trying the carriage, and Frederick teased him so much to take him up on the seat, that at last he did. After they had gone a little way, he dropped the whip, and Peter went down for it. The horses, finding the reins in weaker hands, set off. Luckily the harness gave way, and nothing suffered but the carriage.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

That was not enough, perhaps! And who, upon the whole, has more reason to complain than I?

*Mary Anne.*

Frederick, who had his head terribly cut: but above all, poor Peter that lost his place by it.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

I cannot think of it yet with patience. That fine adventure cost me above eighty guineas!

*Mary Anne.*

And how much grief did it cost the good-natured Frederick. He will never forgive himself, for having occasioned poor Peter's disgrace.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Two good-for-nothing fellows, fit to go together! I am surprized, however, that you pick out the worst characters, and plead their cause. Really  
it

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it is a pity that you were not born a boy, to be companion to your cousin. I think, you would have had charming adventures together.

*Mary Anne.*

Nay, but —

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Hold your tongue! your teasing tires me. I am going to take a turn in the garden. Go find Dorothea, and both of you come to me. (*Goes out without his hat.*)

SCENE VIII.

*Mary Anne.*

I shall have a good deal of trouble to bring him about. However, let us not despair. He is only ill-natured in words.

SCENE IX.

*Mary Anne, Dorothea.*

*Dorothea* (*half opening the door, and peeping in*)  
Hift.

*Mary Anne.*

Well?

*Dorothea.*

Is my uncle out?

*Mary Anne.*

He is just gone. Where is Frederick?

X

*Dorothea.*



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*Dorothea.*

He waits for us in the back stairs.

*Mary Anne.*

You have no more to do than take him to our room.

*Dorothea.*

No; that won't do. Jenny is there.

*Mary Anne.*

Why, cannot we bring him here? Nobody comes here when my papa is out.

*Dorothea.*

You are right; and it will be easier too for him to slip out upon occasion. Stay here, I will bring him up.

SCENE X.

*Mary Anne.*

How impatient I am to hear him tell his story! And I shall be glad to see him too. It is above a year since he left us. Ah! I hear him! (Goes to the door to meet him.)

SCENE XI.

*Mary Anne, Dorothea, Frederick.*

*Mary Anne* (embracing him.)

Ah! my dear cousin,

*Dorothea.*

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*Dorothea.*

He deserves this kindness, indeed; for the trouble that he has caused us.

*Mary Anne.*

I see him, and all is forgotten.

*Frederick.*

My dear cousin, do I find you then still the same? You have never been so hard upon me as my sister.

*Dorothea.*

If I were as much so as your uncle; ah! then —

*Frederick.*

In the first place, what does he say? Can it be true that he is so enraged against me?

*Dorothea.*

If he knew us to conceal you here, we should have no more to do than quit the house, and go about our business.

*Mary Anne.*

Oh! it is very true. Do not think of appearing before him yet a while. He is in a humour to do you a mischief just now.

*Frederick.*

What can our head matter have written to him?

*Dorothea.*

A handsome encomium upon your exploits.

*Mary Anne.*

My brother had touched a little upon the subject by yesterday's post.

*Frederick.*

What! has Richard written? Then I have occasion for nothing more to justify me. He knows the whole matter as well as I, for I trusted him with every thing.

*Mary Anne.*

One needs only to judge of you from his letter.

*Frederick.*

Well, if I be not innocent, I am the greatest rogue —

*Dorothea.*

That is saying nothing. You must be either one or the other.

*Frederick.*

And could you think me guilty? What is my crime? selling my watch?

*Dorothea.*

No more than that? who can tell if your shirt too, and your clothes. —

*Frederick.*

Very true. I would have sold every thing, if I had occasion for more money.

*Dorothea.*

A very pretty defence, truly! and to pass whole nights from the school!

*Frederick.*

*Frederick.*

One night, sister.

*Dorothea.*

And to fly against a proper chastisement?

*Frederick.*

Say, rather against an outrage that I did not deserve. If I had submitted to it, I should always have borne a blot in the opinion of my uncle: and if they had expelled me, I should never have appeared before you.

*Mary Anne.*

But, dear Frederick, what can you say in your defence? We should know it, in order to clear you to papa.

*Frederick.*

Here is the fact. Some days ago they talked of a fair that was to be in the neighbouring village. Our master gave a few of us leave to go there, in order to amuse ourselves, and gratify our curiosity.

*Dorothea.*

Ah! then it was for oranges and tarts that your watch and your Whole Duty of Man went, or perhaps for a sight of Monkeys and tumblers.

*Frederick.*

Surely, my sister must have a great taste for these things, to suppose one could spend money on them. No, it was not so. I was dry, and went into a publick house to have some beer.

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*Dorothea.*

Why, that is worse still.

*Frederick.*

Really, sister, you are very severe. But do let me finish. While I was sitting there. —

*Mary Anne* (*listening at the door.*)

We are undone! my papa! I hear him!

*Dorothea.*

Run! run!

*Frederick.*

No; I will wait for my uncle, and throw myself at his feet.

*Mary Anne.*

Oh! no, dear cousin; he is not capable of listening to you. Do, for my sake. —

*Frederick.*

You would have me?

*Mary Anne.*

Yes, yes; leave me to manage for you. (*She pushes him by the shoulders to the door of the back stairs, shuts it upon him, and returns*)

SCENE XII.

*Mr. Vaughan, Mary Anne, Dorothea.*

*Mary Anne.*

Ah! papa, I see you are returned already from your walk.

*Mr.*



*Mr. Vaughan.*

I am looking for my hat. Hang it. I do not know where I have left it.

*Dorothea (looking about.)*

Here, here it is.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

You could not think of bringing it to me,

*Dorothea.*

I must have been blind sure, not to see it.

*Mary Anne.*

Who can think of every thing?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Truly, you have so many things to take up your attention!

*Mary Anne.*

I was just thinking of poor Frederick.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Must I constantly have that name rung in my ears?

*Mary Anne.*

Well, papa, let us talk no more about him. Would not you chuse to finish your walk before the dew falls?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

No. I will go out no more this evening. (*Mary Anne and Dorothea look at each other, shaking their heads with an air of disappointment.*) It is too late.

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Besides, I have just been told that my old coachman is below, and would speak with me.

*Mary Anne and Dorothea.*

What Peter?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Whatever damage he has caused me, the mischief is done, and he has been sufficiently punished for it. I would know what he has to say to me.

*Mary Anne*

He might very well wait until you returned from your walk.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

No, no. I shall dismiss him the sooner. After all (*Mary Anne and Dorothea whisper together.*) (*to Mary Anne.*) When your father — (*to Dorothea.*) When your uncle speaks to you, I think that you should listen to him. After all — (*Dorothea endeavours to steal away.*) Where are you going, Dorothea?

*Dorothea (confused.)*

I have business down stairs

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Well, tell Peter to come up. (*Dorothea goes out.*)

### SCENE XIII.

*Mr. Vaughan, Mary Anne.*

*Mr. Vaughan.*

After all, I pity the poor man. I never had so good a coachman. My horses were so sleek, that  
one

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one might see one's face in their coats; and he never embezzled their corn at the alehouse.

*Mary Anne.*

Ah! if you had kept him, you would have spared poor Frederick many a sorrowful moment.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Say no more of him. It was he that occasioned me to discharge Peter, and to be at present without a coachman; for after him I conceived a dislike to all others. I shall never find one to replace him,

SCENE XIV.

*Mr. Vaughan, Mary Anne, Dorothea and Peter.*

*Dorothea.*

Uncle here is Peter.

*Peter,*

I beg pardon, sir, but I cannot think that you are still angry with me. I hope you will not take it amiss that I have made bold to wait on you as I passed the house, and to beg you to let me have a discharge.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Did not I give you one?

*Peter.*

I never had any other than "There; take your wages; quit my house this moment, and never let

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me see you again." You did not give me time, sir, to ask for a gentler discharge,

*Mr. Vaughan.*

You did not deserve more ceremony from me, after destroying my finest carriage. I wish that Frederick had broke his neck at the same time.

*Peter.*

What would you have of it, Sir? A coachman's sense is in his whip, and I had just lost possession of mine. But I shall be wiser for the future.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Well, it is all over. How do you live?

*Peter.*

Ah! dear master, since I left your house, I have never had a happy moment. You know upon quitting your service, I went to live with Major Bramfield. Oh! what a master! he could never speak but with his cane lifted up; rest his soul!

*Mr. Vaughan.*

He is dead then?

*Peter.*

Yes, to the great joy of his soldiers. He never gave me his orders without swearing like a Turk. His horses had their full measure of corn, and his people plenty of hard knocks, but not much bread.

*Mary Anne.*

Ah! poor Peter! why did you stay in his service?

*Peter.*

*Peter.*

Where could I go? What kept me there besides, was, that my wife found employment in the house in washing and mending the linen. She earned at least half as much as maintained our children. Every one trembled before the Major. Death alone made him tremble, and laid him low. At present I am out of place, and do not know where to lay my head.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

But you know that I never wish any one to starve, much less an old servant.

*Peter.*

Ah! I always thought so; but those terrible words "Never let me see you again," sounded continually like a clap of thunder in my ears. Ten of the Major's greatest oaths could not have frightened me so much.

*Mary Anne.*

And you have had no master since?

*Peter.*

Ah! Miss, it is not here as in London. In the poor little villages about here, people want their corn more for themselves than for their horses. I worked at daily labour in the fields, my wife spun, and my children went about asking charity. But we all together made so little, that we were not able at the week's end to pay the rent of a poor garret.



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garret. Very soon we had nothing but the earth for our bed, and the sky for our covering. My poor wife died of grief and hardship. (*wipes his eyes.*)

*Mr. Vaughan.*

You deserved it all. Why did not you come and ask my assistance?

*Mary Anne (to Dorothea.)*

Now my papa shews himself once more. A good sign for Frederick.

*Peter.*

Ah! sir, what a woman it was! Sure never was a better wife. Whenever I came home at night without having earned a farthing, and thought that I must go to bed hungry, I always found half of her morsel of bread left purposely for me. When I flamed with rage like one in despair, and would destroy every thing round me, she always restored me to my calm senses, and made me a reasonable man again. Now she is dead, and I cannot bring her to life. There began my real unhappiness, and heaven knows where it will end.

*Dorothea.*

Ah! poor Peter!

*Peter.*

I had no more hopes of finding a service in these parts; so I set out one fine evening with my little girl in my arms, and I took my boy by the hand.

We

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We walked a great part of the night, and slept the remainder under a hedge. Next morning, by break of day, we were in sight of a town. Luckily there was a fair there that day. I earned some money by carrying burthens. But, sir, I must say, it was an angel, an angel from heaven, Master Frederick —

*Mr. Vaughan.*

An angel? what Frederick? that reprobate?

*Mary Anne and Dorothea. (approaching Peter with looks of joy and curiosity.)*

What, Frederick? Frederick?

*Peter.*

Dear master, use me ill if you will; but not that fine generous child. I would rather that you should trample me under your feet.

*Dorothea.*

Oh! tell us, Peter, tell us.

*Peter.*

My little Lucy went to ask a charity at the door of a public house. Master Richard and Master Frederick were setting there at a table, with some beer before them.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Ay! fine inclinations truly! In an ale house!

*Dorothea.*

Nay, uncle, he only went to refresh himself.

*Mr.*

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*Mr. Vaughan.*

What business had he in the town at all?

*Mary Anne.*

He had leave to see the fair. Your good Richard, you see, was there too.

*Peter.*

He presently knew my child, and rose from table in spite of all that his companion could say. He made poor little Lucy drink a glass of beer, took her by the hand, and leading her out, heard from herself a brief account of our misery. He then desired her to bring him to me, and found me in the next street, drinking out of my hat at a well, as the heat of my work had made me dry. I thought that I should run mad with joy upon seeing him. All shabby and dirty as I was, I took him in my arms before every body, and hugged him so close, the folks were afraid that I should strangle him. Ah! he was heartily glad to see me too. At last, as there were a number of people about us, he told me to lead him to a place where we might be by ourselves, and I took him to a barn, where I had already bespoke my bed for the night.

*Mary Anne.*

Ah! papa, I would lay a wager —

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Silence. Well, Peter?

*Peter.*

*Peter.*

I told him all that I have now told you. The dear child began to cry as if he would break his heart. I should beg for you, cried he, as I am the cause of your misfortunes; but I will not sleep without relieving them. Here, Peter, said he, feeling in his pockets, take what money I have about me. I was not for taking it; that made him angry. I told him that it was money given him for his amusement, and that as for me, I was used to hardship. He frowned, and stamped with his feet, and I verily believe that he would have hit me if I had not taken his purse.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

How much was there in it?

*Peter.*

Almost a crown. He would keep no more than six-pence. It shall never be said, continued he, that an honest servant of my uncle's, who has neither robbed nor defrauded any one, shall be obliged in his old age to go begging with his children, and not have so much as a lodging. Take a little room. Before three days I will return, and I will support you ever until I shall have written to my uncle. We have both provoked him against us; but he is too humane, and too generous to abandon you to misery.

*Mr.*

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Did he really say so, Peter?

*Peter.*

I can take my oath of it, master.

*Mary Anne.*

Well, well, we can believe you; finish your story.

*Peter.*

How do you employ your children? said he, as he took my Billy upon his knee. Employ them? said I, they go about selling nosegays and tooth-picks; and when nobody buys, they ask charity. That is not right, said he. They would never learn any thing by that trade but idleness and profligacy. You should make your boy learn a trade, and put the girl out to a decent service.

*Mary Anne.*

Frederick was very right there, papa.

*Peter.*

Yes, said I; but how can I offer the children to any body in these rags? If I had only three guineas, I could soon settle them. There is a weaver hard by, that employs young hands, and would take my Billy, if I could give him two guineas fee; and a dairy-man's wife would take Lucy into her service, if she was a little clad. Then I could go and offer myself for service in some rich family, and not be reduced to stroll about like a vagrant.

*Mr.*



*Mr. Vaughan.*

And what did Frederick say?

*Peter.*

Nothing, sir. He went away; but two days after he returned. Where is the weaver that will take your son apprentice? carry me to him. So I did, and he spoke with him privately for a while. And the dairyman's wife, said he, that will take charge of Lucy? where does she live? I took him there too. He left me at the door, went and spoke to the woman in her dairy, joined me again without saying a word, and we came away. After we had walked about forty yards, he stopped, and taking me by the hand, my honest old friend, said he, make yourself easy as to your children. He then pointed me to a shop of second hand clothes that happened to be not far off, where he had paid beforehand for this jacket, and this great coat. — Don't I look like a squire in them.

*Mary Anne.*

O my excellent cousin! good-natured Frederick!

*Mr. Vaughan.* (wiping his eyes.)

I see now where the watch went.

*Peter.*

That is not all, sir. Did not I catch him slipping money into my pocket? I was positively for returning it to him, and told him that he had already

Y

done

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done too much for me. But if ever I saw him fall in a passion, it was then. He assured me, sir, that it was you who had sent it to him for my use. And when I was for coming here directly to thank you, he told me that you would not have it mentioned. Ah! thought I to myself, Mr. Vaughan was so good a master! Perhaps he would take me again. For all that I did not dare to come, as Master Frederick had forbidden me.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

O Frederick! my dear Frederick! you have still then that noble and generous heart that I always took you to possess from your infancy.

*Mary Anne.*

And what determined you at last to appear again before my uncle?

*Peter.*

The case was this: They would not take my Billy without a copy of the register of his baptism, and for that I must come here to the clerk of this parish. As I entered the village, I heard that my Lord Vally wanted a coachman. It seemed as if Master Frederick had sent good luck along with me. I waited on my Lord, who promised to take me if I could bring him a proper discharge from my last master. I could not go into the other world to ask the Major for one; so I took my chance, though sadly afraid, to apply to you. And should you even re-

fuse

use me, I shall at least have returned you my acknowledgements for the relief that you were so kind as to convey to me through the hands of Master Frederick,

*Mr. Vaughan.*

No, honest Peter. You are indebted for them to himself alone. It is he who has stripped himself to cover you. But he is also indebted to you for the return of my favour. From what a misfortune you save him! Yes, but for you, but for you, so great was my resentment against him, I should have banished him from my presence for ever.

*Peter.*

Say you so, sir? Then I should be the happiest man in the world! What, to save him from misfortune, as he has me! Each of us to owe obligation to the other!

*Mr. Vaughan.*

That sneaking varlet Richard had almost turned my heart against him. How could I trust that knave, who has so often imposed upon me? But the head master of the school! —

*Mary Anne.*

Why, papa, he must have imposed on him as well as you.

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*Mr. Vaughan.*

But bless me, they write me word that Frederick is run away. If he should grow desperate! If any misfortune should happen to him!

*Peter.*

A horse! a horse! I'll bring him back to you, if he were at the world's end. (*going to run out.*)

*Dorothea* (*holding him.*)

My dear uncle, would you really pardon him? would you take him to your arms once more?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Ay; though he had sold all his clothes! though he were to return as naked as he was born! (*Dorothea makes a sign to Mary Anne, and runs out.*)

*Mary Anne.*

What if he were here, papa?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Here? has any one seen him? where is he? where is he?

*Peter.*

Ah! if he was here! if he was here! I would jump up to the ceiling for joy.

*Mary Anne.*

Well, papa, do you see him?

SCENE

SCENE XV.

*Mr. Vaughan, Frederik, Mary Anne, Dorothea, Peter.* (*Frederik entering, kneels to his*

*uncle. Peter shows an extravagance of joy. Dorothea and Mary Anne melt into tears.*)

*Frederick.*

Ah! uncle, my dear uncle, will you forgive me?

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Forgive you? I love you a thousand times better than before. You deserve it; and shall never leave me again.

*Frederick.*

No uncle; never, never. (*Turning, he sees Peter, and takes him by the hand*) Ah! if you had seen the misery of this poor man and his children, if you had been the cause of their distress!

*Peter.*

'Twas I, 'twas I myself; why should I have let you climb upon my seat, or have left you to manage a pair of fiery horses? But who could refuse you any thing? I could not, though the carriage were to run over me through it. So mark, Master Frederick; never ask me any thing improper again; I should agree to it, I know; but I should go and drown myself directly.



*Mr. Vaughan.*

Why did not you write me an account of all this, instead of selling your watch, your books, and perhaps your clothes. It was at least an imprudence in a child like you, who knows not the value of things.

*Frederick.*

Yes, that is true; but to let this family be a moment longer in their distress, seemed to me as bad as murder. Besides, as you had turned Peter away in a passion, I was afraid that you should forbid me to assist him; and that by disobeying your express orders, I should make myself more blameable.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

What, then, you would have disobeyed me there?

*Frederick.*

Yes, uncle; but in that only.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Kiss me, my brave Frederick. — After all, there is one article in the letter which makes me hesitate; that is your lying out. Where did you pass the night?

*Frederick.*

I had carried Peter the money that day. Our master was not at home in the evening, and I knew that the doors would be shut at ten o'clock. I thought to be home before; and so I should, if I had not gone astray after dark.

*Dorothen.*

*Dorothea.*

Poor brother! where did you lie then?

*Frederick.*

I found an empty old shed, and there I stretched myself upon a great stone, and never slept so well in my life. I was so happy to have relieved Peter!

*Mary Anne.*

Ah! that ill-natured Richard! He took good care not to tell us all this, and yet he knew it.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

From this moment I withdraw my regard from him, and you alone. —

*Frederick.*

No, uncle; I will not be happy at the expence of another, and far less at that of your son.

*Dorothea (taking his hand.)*

How much I ought to love such a brother.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

Well, let him remain at the school; you shall never leave me. I wish to have you always near my heart, and will have masters for you of all sorts, if they were to come a hundred miles.

*Peter (making a low bow.)*

My worthy master, you are always the same.

*Mr. Vaughan (patting him on the shoulder.)*

Peter, have you agreed with Lord Vasty?

*Peter.*

Bless your heart, sir, I had not my discharge.

*Mr. Vaughan.*

You shall not heed one. I see, I shall make Frederick and you happy in having you near each other once more. But never let him mount upon your seat again. We shall take care of your children too,

*Peter* (sobbing, and crying for joy.)

Dear master! — Sir! are you serious? Is not this a dream? Frederick! Master Frederick! shall any poor children — Ah! let me go and see my old friends in the stable!

THE END.

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THE  
DANGERS  
OF  
SEDUCTION,

A DRAMA,  
IN ONE ACT.

*Persons.*

*Probus,*                      *a Roman.*

*Askan,*                      *his Son.*

*Mela,*                      *a Seducer.*

*The SCENE represents a dark wood. A  
storm is heard at a distance, which by  
degrees approaches nearer.*



THE  
DANGERS OF SEDUCTION,  
A DRAMA.

SCENE I.

*Askan* (alone.)

**M**ela comes not. The faithless man abandons me, after he has made me wretched. What is now the fruit of my crime? Shall I ever be able to look my father in the face? Will he not in mine read the name of his robber? I am ingrateful — no I can never again return home. The peaceful dwelling of virtue will harbour no guilty criminal. But whither shall I turn my steps? Whither. — What do I ask? — To hell, whose jaws are open'd to receive me; it is the habitation of the wicked. I will no longer detain its prey. Yes, yes, my resolution is taken. — Hell itself cannot have greater torments

ments than those which I carry in my bosom. There at least I shall not meet my father. What withholds me? This wilderness, this dark abode of hydras and spectres is a proper temple for such a dreadful sacrifice. Every thing tempts me to the horrid act. The sun has withdrawn its beams from me. The heavens are obscured in threatening thunder clouds, and the birds of the wood are become mute at sight of me. All nature revolts at my existence. — Come then ye furies, receive the shade of a monster.

*(going to stab himself is prevented by Mela.)*

## SCENE II.

*Askan, Mela.*

*Mela.*

Soft! soft!

*Askan.*

Leave me, unworthy.

*Mela.*

Thou ravest, knowest thou no longer thy friend?

*Askan.*

My friend? Say rather, my seducer. I know thee but too well, thou author of my misery.

*Mela.*

Mad that I was to run to thy assistance; on thy account I have refused a delicious banquet, with

two of the emperor's singing women — yet perhaps it is not too late. Farewell.

(going. *Askan* follows him a few steps.)

*Askan.*

Barbarian! this is the last blow thou canst give me; thou forsakest me in the height of misfortunes, and rob'st me of the only means to end them. — Give me my sword.

*Mela.*

To a mad man as thou art, weapons cannot be entrusted — One must fly him. He resembles a wild beast.

*Askan.*

It is true. I am yet more cruel than a wild beast; but it is thou that hast made me what I am.

*Mela.*

Thou deceivest thyself: if my advice was of any account to thee, thou wouldst not behave so foolishly. Thou hast lost thy money, that is all, and where thou foundst that, there canst thou find more.

*Askan.*

Ye Gods! is it possible, that man can despise your laws with quiet heart; and live in peace?

*Mela.*

Because the Gods do not answer thee, I will in their stead for the last time inform thee, that they are too elevated to attend to the actions of mortals.

*Askan.*

*Askani.*

How happy should I be, if I was able to stifle the voice of my conscience, which confutes thy principles.

*Mela.*

The voice of thy nurse. — Spurn it, and it will at length be silent, and thou wilt be content with every action that gratifies thy wishes, and leave to the feeble minded vulgar the empty names of virtue or of vice.

*Askani.*

Heavens! is there then no vice, the robbery that I have committed? Does it not offend the Gods? Yet suppose it was indifferent to them; will it also be indifferent to my worthy father?

*Mela.*

If thou wilt follow me, thou shalt have as little to fear from him, as from the Gods.

*Askani.*

Oh Mela tell me a place, where I can fly, where I can hide myself from the whole world. But where shall I, destitute of every thing, find a place of shelter. Thou knowest that in the company of thy friends, all that money was lost, that my guilty hands. — No death only can rescue me from the most dreadful wretchedness.

*Mela.*

*Mela.*

Thy imagination flies ever from the subject. — To insure thy repose, it is not necessary either to fly out of Rome, or out of the world.

*Askan.*

Not out of Rome? Hast thou forgotten that my father dwells in Rome? Even here in this wood I tremble lest I should meet him; his country-seat is here. I see well, Mela, thou hast flatter'd me with a forlorn hope.

*Mela.*

I did indeed, yesterday appoint to meet thee here, to afford the means to extricate thyself; but I find thee in such a situation that thou art incapable of taking a manly resolution. — With such an effeminate soul nothing is to be done.

*Askan.*

What shall I do? To one in despair every thing is indifferent.

*Mela.*

First swear to me that thou wilt hear me with patience.

*Askan.*

I swear to thee.

*Mela.*

Thy absence will necessarily cause thy father to suspect that thou art the person, who hath visited his coffers. —

*Askan.*



## THE DANGERS

*Askan.*

It is this thought which distracts me — After such an outrage dare I ever appear in the presence of the best of fathers? The majesty of his virtue would consume me.

*Mela.*

It is not necessary to bear his presence long; a few drops out of this bottle which thou canst put into his drinking-cup, will soon free thee from such a troublesome moralist.

*Askan (enraged.)*

Fly monster e'er my hand punish thy temerity — Is this the mean with which thou wouldst help me!

*Mela.*

Good! Pitiful coward, I leave thee, never to see thee more. Go surrounded with ignominy and poverty and renounce the possession of an immense fortune, which a courageous moment would have insured thee.

*Askan.*

Shall I destroy the author of my days! — I cannot support the thought. —

*Mela.*

If thy own advantage cannot move thee, know then, that through this deed thou insurest the happiness of thy father whom thou believest thou wouldst injure.

*Askan.*

*Askan.*

What language!

*Mela.*

New as it may sound to thee, it is nevertheless true. If an Elysium is prepared for the virtuous, thou dost thy father a service, in giving him an opportunity to receive this glorious reward without delay. This conclusion I made when my old uncle refused to pay my debts — He died as a Socrates, and it assisted us both.

*Askan.*

Ye Gods!

*Mela.*

Again with thy Gods — Well then their example may assist thy doubts. Jupiter himself dethroned his father — He would have murder'd him; had he not been immortal. Yet suppose the Gods punish in us what they permit in themselves, thou hast still time to disarm their anger, and canst also appease the shade of thy father by costly sacrifices; (*Probus appears at a distance*) but I hear a noise, let us retire deeper into the woods, I have not yet inform'd thee of all my reasons (*aside.*) How much trouble it costs to compell a coward to be happy.

## SCENE III.

*Probus (alone with bows and arrows.)*

Every where the frightful harpy of care pursues me. In vain I seek repose that flies me. Neither the charms of my peaceful countryhouse, nor the diversions of the chase, can restore it me again. Oh my son! Wherefore wast thou born! Ungrateful and yet too well beloved child! Why hast thou fled the bosom of thy father, whose Idol thou wast! All my possessions, all my cares, all, even my life, was thine. Oh! return, wheresoever thou art, return back to my arms which are opened to receive thee. Give me my son again, ye Gods! give him to the tenderest of fathers. Give him to virtue again. A storm approaches, I must hasten. Oh may I find him at home. Here comes somebody. How grievous would it be to me, should it be a murderer. I will hide myself. I cannot die, before I have once more seen my son. (*Hides himself in a hollow oak.*)

## SCENE IV.

*Askan (alone walks disorder'd about the stage)*

Mela is a villain, but he says true, my father and I cannot live in the same world. If I die my death and yet more my crimes will leave behind an incurable wound in his soul. If he dies, he will

will be free'd at once from all his torments, and if his spirit survives, it will be placed in a world where the thoughts of his son will not persecute him. Well then my resolution is taken, and through compassion will I cut the thread of his days. Who — I a parricide. — I shudder at the thought, but am I not one already — Have I not poisoned the life of my father? What more then remains for me to do? Is virtue in comparison to what I have done? — Yes he must die and the sword of justice shall revenge his death on my head.

## SCENE V.

*Probus, Askan.*

*Probus.*

Here I am, my son, execute thy purpose. I myself entreat thee to kill me, but let not the world know that I die by the hand of my child. We are here alone and suspicions will fall on a robber.

*Askan* (during this speech falls at the feet of his father.)

Oh Heavens! my father. Why have I not the power to fly?

*Probus.*

Fly not, my son, by all the Gods fly not. I cannot survive the loss of thy virtue. Here strike my heart, pierce it through, thou wast ever master of it.

*Askan (in despair.)*

Tear me from hence ye furies. The eye of the judge of hell would be less frightful to me than this eye full of blessing.

*Probus.*

Why dost thou hesitate cruel youth? Yet thou art unarmed. (*gives him a dagger*) take this steel and end my sorrows.

*Askan (takes it with impatience.)*

Thou shalt soon see whose heart it shall pierce. Receive the sin offering of my crimes. (*attempts to stab himself.*)

*Probus (disarms him.)*

Hold unfortunate! and deprive not thyself of repentance.

*Askan.*

Repentance! I am only capable of despair; the Sygian adder that tears my soul will not be satisfied



## OF SEDUCTION. 357

sied with any thing less than my blood. If thou wilt spare me the crime of selfmurder, kill me, my father, rid the world of a monster, and vindicate the honour of nature and of heaven.

*Probus.*

Let virtue awake in thy bosom. I have sown it there, and I have seen it bud. If a seducer hath stifled this young plant yet is the seed not intirely destroy'd. Come, my son, return back under the roof of thy father who forgives thee.

*Askan.*

Thou forgivest me? Now are my torments at the highest. Thou forgivest me? Hast thou forgotten that I am the robber of thy treasure and of thy life? Dost thou not hear the thunder roll over our heads? The Gods chide thee that thou forgivest me, irritate not their anger, too indulgent father, and if thou wilt not kill me out of justice, kill me out of compassion.

*Probus.*

Ye Gods!

## LAST SCENE.

*Probus, Askan and Mela.**Mela* (not perceiving *Probus* and *Askan*.)

I believe I have seen in this place a hollow oak  
 which would shelter me from this terrible storm.  
 (he perceives them.) What do I see, *Askan* at the  
 feet of his father? I am lost. (to *Askan*.) What is  
 become of thy courage *Askan*? I see well, unfor-  
 tunate, that I must assist thee. (*Askan* snatches the  
 dagger out of *Probus*'s hand and is going to attack *Mela*,  
 when in the moment that *Mela* draws his sword against  
*Probus*, a thunder clap is heard which strikes him dead,  
*Askan* through terror lets the dagger fall from his  
 hand.)

*Probus.*

Almighty Gods!

*Askan* (after an astonish'd silence.)

Here he lies the murderer of my virtue. Oh thou  
 avenger of crimes! Why hast thou only destroy'd  
 him — Hast thou no more thunder? Here is the  
 place that thou shouldst strike, (He uncovers his breast.

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So long as I live ye Gods! So long ye are but half just.

*Probus.*

Thou art yet to learn my son, the difference that they make between the seducer and the seduced, They still love thee, or their thunder would also have destroy'd thee, but they permit thee to live that thou mayst repent of thy faults. Hear their voice; hear also the voice of thy father, or he will die at thy feet through anguish. (*Throws himself at the feet of Askan.*)

*Askan* (*raises him.*)

Oh Heaven! the most virtuous of fathers on his knees before the most degenerate of sons. Here I am, make me what thou wilt; the resolution to live is the severest punishment I can possibly inflict on myself. Oh may the inexhaustible tears of repentance wash away the remembrance of my infamous deeds.

## 360 THE DANGERS OF SEDUCTION.

*Probus.*

The Gods be praised — My son is again found!  
Now have I lived long enough. Come my child,  
let us fly from this dreadful place, and return an  
offering of thanks to almighty Jove.

THE END.



**ERRATA.**

For Ieremy, Iennet, Ionas, read Jeremy, Jennet, Jonas.

Page 67. line 10. read we. p. 100. l. 6. r.

Ship.



STATES

For the purpose of the present investigation, the following data were obtained from the records of the Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, for the years 1910, 1920, and 1930.